

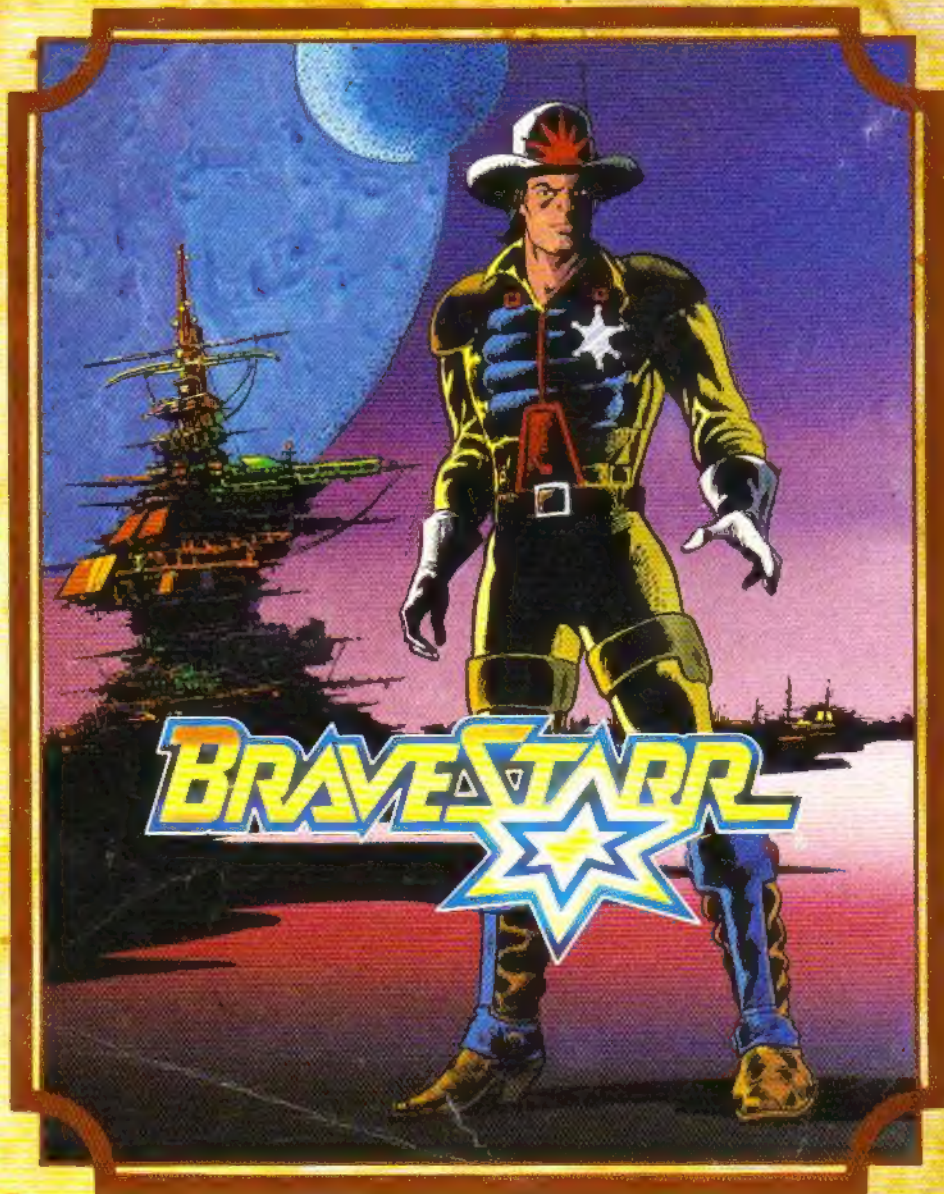
3·2·1·Contact

THE CASE
OF
THE HAUNTED
HOUSE

Scientists
Explore Weird
Happenings



WANTED



A LEGEND IS BORN!

**FOLLOW THE DAILY
ADVENTURES OF BRAVESTARR
ON A T.V. STATION IN YOUR AREA!**

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3-2-1-Contact



Page 6



Page 31

Page 4



Page 16



Featuring This Month

- 6** Night Life Photo Quiz
- 10** Believe It or Not!
Scientists Try to Explain
Mysterious Happenings
- 16** Damon's Story:
A Blind Boy Takes On
the Seeing World
- 20** Who Is This?
A CONTACT Poster
- 37** Body Puzzles

SQUARE ONE TV SECTION

- 27** Blackstone's
Magic Page
- 28** Mathnet: Can
You Solve the Crime?
- 31** Getting Mr. Glitch

Plus Our Regular Departments

- 2** TNT: Tomorrow's News
Today
- 4** Factoids
- 22** The Bloodhound Gang
- 25** Mail
- 26** Reviews
- 32** Any Questions?
- 34** Basic Training
- 36** The Slipped Disk Show
- 38** Extra!
- 40** Did It!

Cover: Illustration by Bob Pepper



PHOTO: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thumbs up! John Kevin Hill, 11, prepares for take-off.

High Flies

Some people just won't stay on the ground. They blast off in rockets, float by in balloons, shoot out of circus cannons, and parachute out of planes. They also try to set records. Here's a round-up of some of the latest flight news:

- In order to see out the cockpit window, John Kevin Hill of Arlington, TX, had to sit on three pillows. Last July he became the first 11-year-old to pilot a plane all the way across the U.S.! Because John isn't old enough to have a license, his flying teacher had to ride with him in the small single-engine Cessna plane. John told CONTACT: "Now I want to fly around the world."

- Two scientists in Boston, MA, have designed a human-powered plane they call *Daedalus* (DEAD-uh-less). In Greek myth, Daedalus was a person who escaped from an island by flying 70 miles with handmade wings. This March, members of the Greek Olympic bicycling team will try to repeat Daedalus's adventure. They'll be pedaling *Daedalus* 70 miles over

water from the island of Crete to the mainland of Greece.

- Tyler Roddick, 10, of Pasadena, CA, didn't leave the ground. But he launched a Frisbee on a flight that set a record for his age group. He threw the Frisbee 186.97 feet—almost two thirds of a football field!

Moving News

You would think that you could count on a monument to stay put. But the Washington Monument just moved 94.5 feet.

Don't worry—the Washington Monument isn't going for a walk. Satellites and lasers are helping scientists measure heights and locations much more accurately. Thanks to the new equipment, scientists have learned that 250,000 U.S. monuments aren't located exactly where scientists thought.

The "moving" monuments will

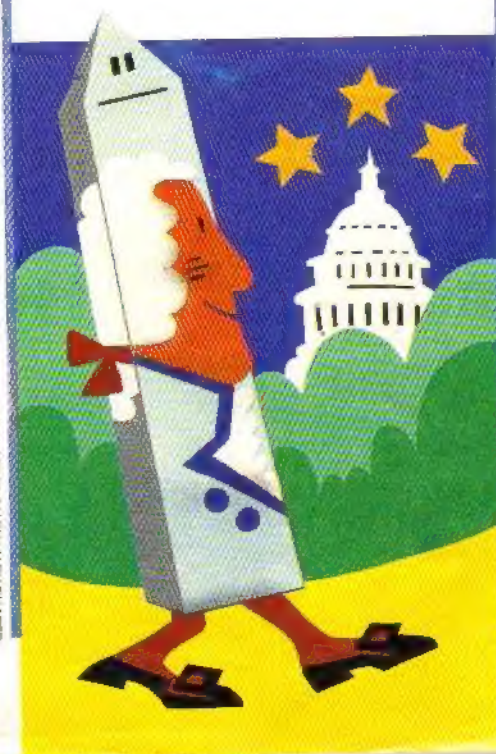


ILLUSTRATION BY MARY DUARTE

stay the same in real-life. They'll change only on future maps. But the new measurements spell sad news for the Himalayan peak, Mt. Everest. Long thought to be the highest mountain in the world, Everest may be at least 36 feet shorter than another Himalayan mountain, K-2.

Story suggested by Wade M. Johnson, of Marietta, GA



ILLUSTRATION BY RICH LIPMAN

Lip

Top of the Charts

In a hospital, a doctor has to read a patient's chart very carefully. Tiny changes in the zigs or zags of a graph can mean big changes in the patient's condition. Busy doctors have to have sharp eyes to see these changes.

But thanks to a new hospital chart system, doctors can hear the changes in a patient's condition. A computer turns the charts into music.

If a patient's blood or urine test is normal, the computer plays a familiar song, like "America the

Beautiful." But when the chart isn't normal, the computer hits wrong notes. Those sour notes warn the doctor that the patient needs help.

Greetings, Aliens!

"Hello, Star-3. M-M-Max Headroom here, with a message from your friends back on P-P-Planet Earth..."

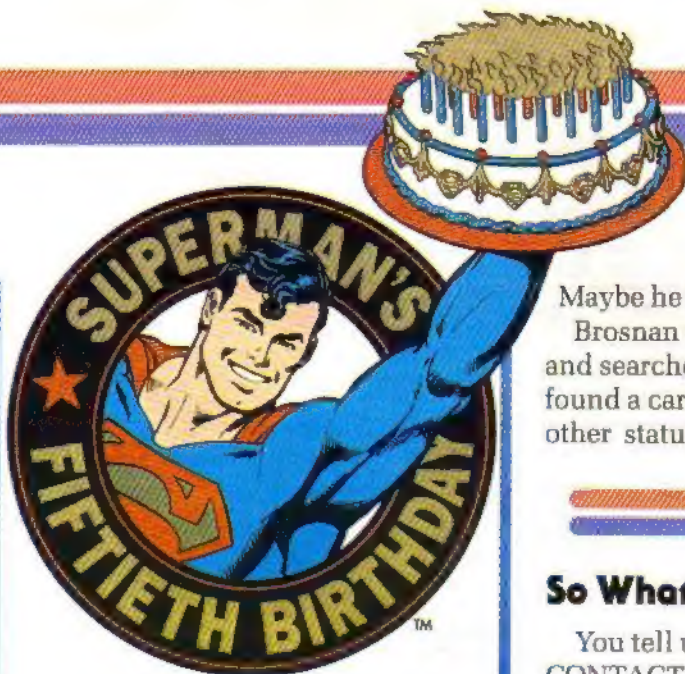
Max Headroom, TV's computerized personality, probably won't get to deliver that message. But someday, scientists may use an electronic messenger to communicate with life on other planets—if there is any.

A Soviet scientist has suggested using radio waves to beam up the electronic image of a human. That way, Earth's messenger could travel to faraway planets at the speed of light. But first, we would have to tell the life forms how to build a TV!

Story suggested by William Law, of Casper, WY



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Super Party

Faster than a speeding bullet! More powerful than a locomotive! Even though he's 50 years old, Superman's still going strong!

The famous science-fiction hero first appeared in a comic book in June, 1938. So this coming June, the people of Cleveland, Ohio, will give Superman a week-long party and a ticker tape parade. Why Cleveland? Superman was created by two Cleveland high school students, Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel.

Buried Treasure

Buried far beneath the sands of Guadalupe, CA, is a lost Egyptian city. Deep below ground, four gigantic statues of the ancient leader Ramses II guard the city's temple. What's an Egyptian city doing in California? It's a movie set from 1923!

Filmmaker Peter Brosnan was reading the autobiography of a famous film director, Cecil B. DeMille, when he came across what seemed like a hint: Maybe DeMille didn't take apart the set from his movie *The Ten Commandments*, Brosnan thought.

Maybe he buried it!

Brosnan went to Guadalupe and searched in the sand. Soon he found a carved horse's head and other statues. He found the set!

So What's New?

You tell us and you'll get a nifty CONTACT T-shirt—if we print your story. Send us any science stories from the news that have to do with the future. (Be sure to tell us where you heard the story.)

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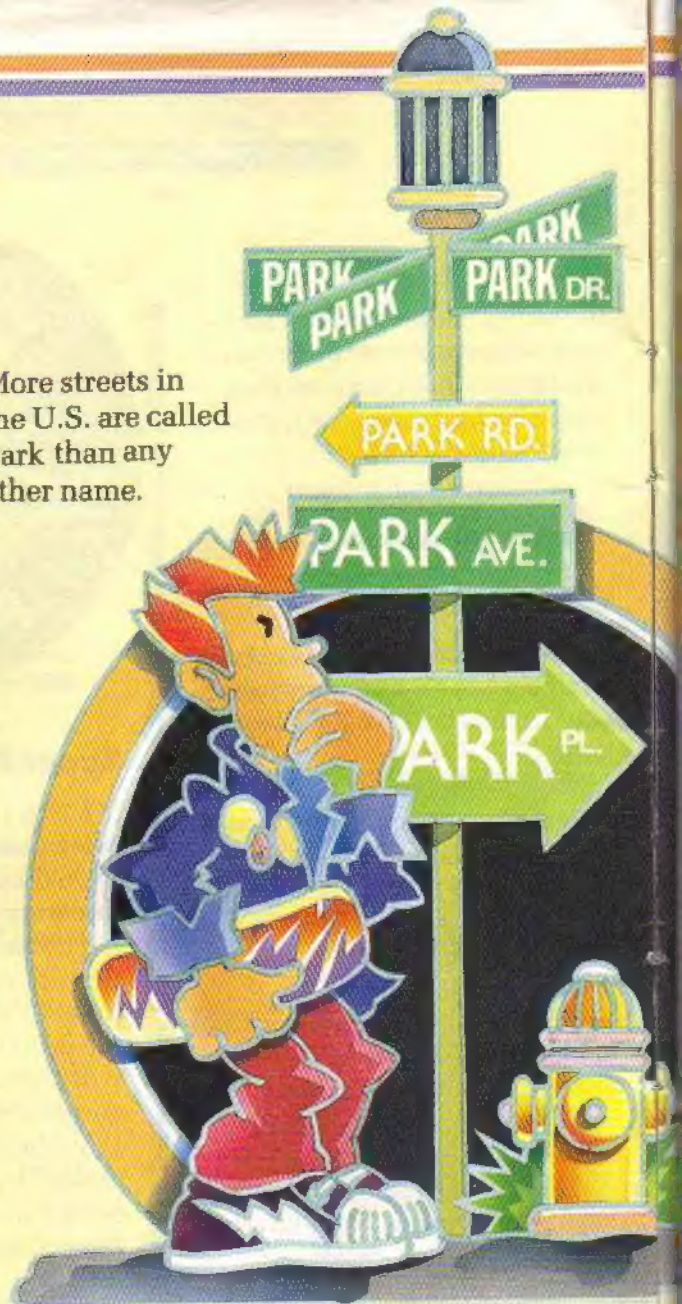
Factoids



A sea bird called the albatross can glide for up to six days without moving its wings.

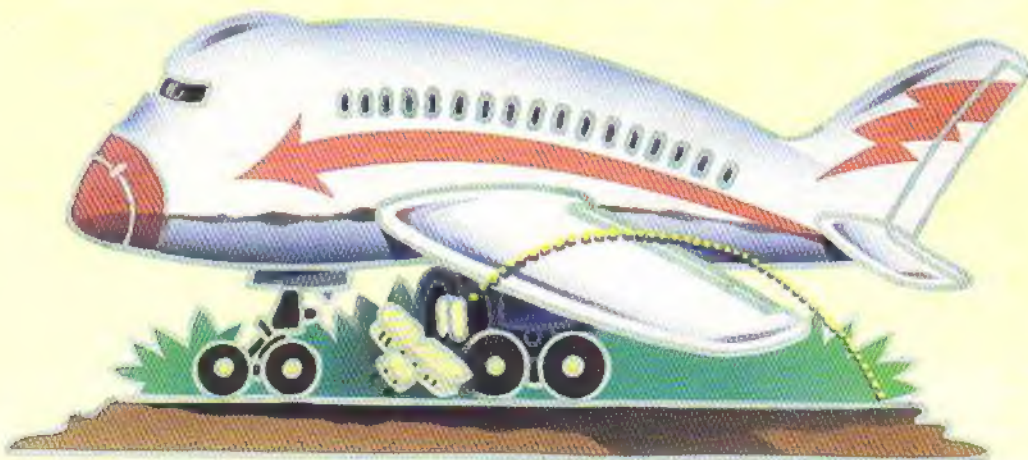


**Your body
contains about
10 gallons
of water.**



A googol is the number one followed by a hundred zeroes.





The Boeing 747 is 231 feet long. That's 111 feet longer than the distance of the Wright Brothers' first flight.

One pencil can be used to write about 45,000 words



The fastest recorded speed of a land snail is .00758 miles per hour.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CAMERON C. R. ACH



NIGHT LIFE

A CONTACT QUIZ

by Richard Chevat

Do you hate to wake up in the morning? You're not alone. In fact, some animals don't wake up until the sun goes down. Creatures that are active at night are called *nocturnal* (nock-TURN-al). Are you in the dark about nocturnal animals? Lighten up and have some fun with this quiz.



PHOTO © ANIMALS/ANIMALS/ST. LESZCZYNSKI



Rocky the Flying Squirrel and his pal, Bullwinkle, are usually seen during the day, but a real flying squirrel is nocturnal. Flying squirrels are found in Europe, Asia and North America. Of course, they don't really fly. To get from tree to tree they:

- A. hop.
- B. glide.
- C. climb up and down.

PHOTO © MICKEY GIBSON/ANIMALS/ANIMALS



Hippopotamuses are not really nocturnal animals. They live in Africa and during the day they stay in rivers or lakes. They can stay under water for minutes at a time. But at night they leave the safety of the river to do one important thing. What is it?

- A. To migrate to another river.
- B. To feed on grass and leaves.
- C. To go to the movies.

PHOTO © MICHAEL KENT/ANIMALS/ANIMALS



It can be difficult to tell the difference between moths and butterflies. Most moths are active at night, but some fly around during the day. Most are dull and plain, but some are brightly colored. Like butterflies, all moths were once caterpillars. When the moth in this picture was a caterpillar, it had a special talent. Can you guess what it was?

- A.** It could predict the weather.
- B.** It ate mosquitoes.
- C.** It wove silk cocoons.

PHOTO: E. R. DESSINGER/ANIMALS ANIMALS



PHOTO: JON GERLACH/ANIMALS ANIMALS

Owls are the only birds that hunt at night. They are fast flyers, and their feathers are especially fluffy so they don't make much noise when hunting mice and other small animals. Owls have large eyes to help them see in the dark. They can't move their eyes, so they do one of the following:

- A.** They turn their heads in a complete circle.
- B.** They turn their whole bodies.
- C.** They turn their heads, but not in a complete circle.

When the sun starts to go down, millions of bats around the world start waking up. Bats are the only mammals that fly, and there are hundreds of different types. Some are nocturnal, and some are only active at dawn and dusk. Many bats eat small insects, but this bat, called a flying fox, lives on something you might find on your kitchen table. What is it?

- A.** eggs.
- B.** fruit juice.
- C.** breakfast cereal.

PHOTO: ANIMALS ANIMALS/EMILIE ATKINSON/ORBIS ENTERTAINMENT



If you've ever been by a lake or pond at night, you've probably heard the croaking of frogs. Most frogs found in the U.S. are active during the day, but their calls are mainly heard after dark. What are they calling for?

- A.** To attract mates.
- B.** To attract food.
- C.** To get exercise.

Answers

1

D. Flying squirrels have large flaps of skin between their front and back legs. They climb to the top of a tree and jump, stretching their skin flaps like wings. Then they glide to the next tree. As soon as they land, they run around to the other side of the trunk, in case an owl or some other squirrel-eater is following them.

2

D. At night, hippos leave the water to graze on grass and leaves. They eat up to 130 pounds of food a day.

3

C. The silkworm is a moth caterpillar. Its cocoon is made into silk thread.

4

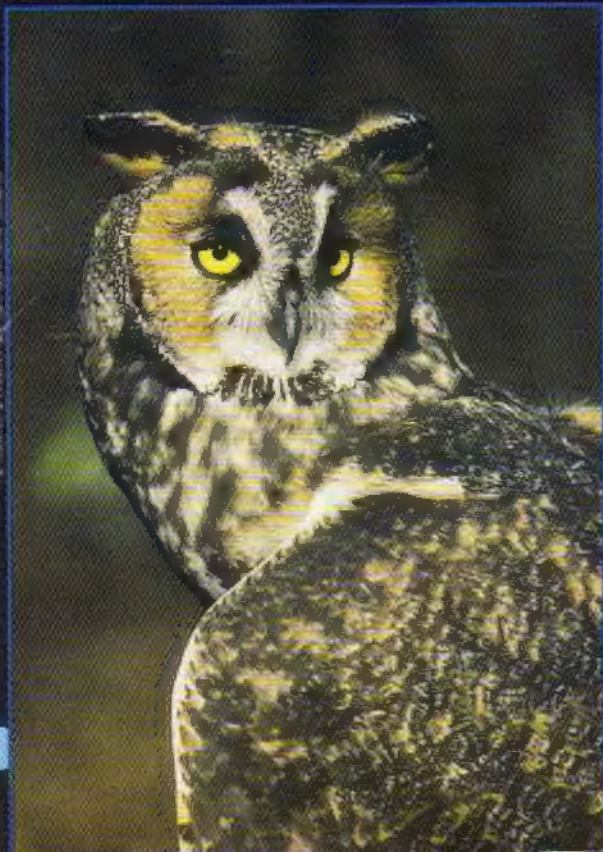
C. Owls can turn their heads around much further than other animals, but they can't turn them in a complete circle.



PHOTO © RICHARD ALAN WOOD/ANIMALS



PHOTO © ANIMALS/ANIMALS JACK U. DE GONINGH



5

A. That ribbet-ribbet is the sound of male frogs trying to attract females.

6

D. Flying foxes live in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia. They eat wild fruit and squeeze the juice out with their jaws. They live in trees and have wingspans of up to five feet.



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Believe It or Not!

By Russell Miller

SCIENTISTS TRY TO EXPLAIN MYSTERIOUS HAPPENINGS

● It's a cold night in southern California. Dozens of people stand in the glow from a bed of burning coals, waiting. The moment comes. One by one, they remove their shoes and socks. One by one, they walk barefoot across the coals. Not a single foot gets burned.

● August 12, 1986. All across the eastern United States, stargazers watch for a meteor shower. Suddenly, a cloud of light appears—but it's no meteor. It's a spinning, star-like ball. It glides across the sky, then disappears. From Texas to Massachusetts, thousands of people see

the UFO—an unidentified flying object—with their own eyes.

● In an Ohio home, lamps fly across the living room. Chairs mysteriously turn over. Vases and glasses break. A girl who lives in the house claims a ghost is causing the mischief. She says she has seen the ghost with her own eyes.

● In a lab in St. Louis, Missouri, scientists study the amazing skills of two teenagers. The boys seem to bend metal just by thinking about it. They seem to read the scientists' thoughts. Can it be? Do they really have the mysterious

mental power called ESP—extra-sensory perception?

Looking for Answers

No way, says the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal—CSICOP (pronounced sigh-cop), for short. CSICOP is a group of scientists with an unusual mission. They check out the “paranormal”—events that some people say you can’t explain with normal facts and logic.

CSICOP members check out amazing stories. They’ve looked into everything from haunted houses to Bigfoot, from astrology to UFOs. So far, they haven’t found a single one that can’t be explained with common sense and a little detective work.

Paul Kurtz, a professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, started CSICOP. He says that nature is full of surprises. So scientists need to examine weird claims. “We want to have an open mind,” he told CONTACT.

The work isn’t always easy. CSICOP members say that many people would rather believe a fantastic tale than dig out the facts. Fakers sometimes use magic tricks that fool even scientists, says James Randi. Mr. Randi should know: He’s an award-winning magician—and a member of CSICOP.

“It’s harder to think about and explain the real mysteries of the world than to come up with somebody from outer space or from the dead,” says Mr. Randi.

Just the Facts, Please

“What are the facts?” That, says Paul Kurtz, is CSICOP’s first question. Often, the details of amazing stories are fuzzy. People who saw weird happenings haven’t clearly explained what they saw. So CSICOP members begin by gathering as much information as they can.

Then they ask sensible questions. Kendrick Frazier, who edits CSICOP’s magazine, *The Skeptical Inquirer*, explained: “What we’re trying to emphasize here is common sense—using your common sense to judge unusual claims.”

Can you use your common sense to solve the mysteries of the firewalkers, the UFO and →



the ESP teens? How about the haunted house? Read on to find out how CSICOP scientists explained the "unexplainable."

Case #1: The Firewalkers

Firewalkers call walking on hot coals "mind over matter." It's really just a matter of physics, say Bernard Leikind and William McCarthy. The two men are scientists at the University of California. Here's how they explained it in CSICOP's *Skeptical Inquirer*:

Think of a hot oven. If you touch a pan inside, you'll get burned. But if you put your hand in without touching the pan, the hot air in the oven won't burn you. (Please don't try this!) Air conducts heat poorly.

Firewalk coals are puffy and full of air, so they work the same way. They may be 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, but they won't pass that heat to a firewalker's foot. In fact, it may work the other way

around: Firewalking feet may cool the coals down.

Firewalkers move quickly, so their feet never touch a hot spot for long. If they're nervous and sweaty, they may be safer still. As sweat evaporates from their feet, it forms a thin, protective layer of vapor between the skin and the coals.


Even firewalkers agree there are easier ways to cool your feet than walking over coals! Firewalking is dangerous. It takes a lot of practice and concentration. And firewalkers say it should never be tried by kids.

Case #2: The UFO

One simple fact solved the mystery of the August 1986 UFO. A CSICOP member checked around and learned that a rocket had been launched in Japan only hours before the UFO sightings. The "unidentified flying object" was a Japanese satellite.

That's not unusual. Most UFOs have later been identified as meteors, planets, satellites, helicopters, weather balloons, even birds.





Case #4: Haunted House

Case #3: The ESP Teens


People who say they have ESP often use tricks to fool scientists. To prove it, Mr. Randi tricked scientists himself. He helped two teenage magicians—Steve Shaw and Mike Edwards—baffle scientists in St. Louis.

Scientists tested Steve and Mike many times over four years. For every test, the teen magicians invented a trick to convince the researchers they had supernatural powers. When they came up against a test too tough for tricks, they threw temper tantrums until the conditions were changed.

"The kids ran the experiments," said Mr. Randi. "That was one of our first rules: Don't let the scientists tell you what to do. You tell *them* what to do." The scientists, he noted, shouldn't have let the teens get away with it.

Case #4: The Haunted House

CSICOP members have heard lots of ghost stories—but they've never found one that was true. Take the poltergeist that was said to be bothering a Columbus, Ohio, girl in 1984. The ghost, the girl claimed, knocked down lamps, overturned chairs and threw objects across the room.

The "poltergeist," it turned out, was the girl herself. "A television camera was left on when she wasn't aware of it," Paul Kurtz told CONTACT. "It 'saw' her knock down a lamp. I think she'd been watching too many late-night horror shows." 

FAMOUS BRAINTEASERS

The letters in these people's names spell the places they live in. Can you find out where they live?

- 1) Ray Kroc
- 2) Colin A. Fall
- 3) Earl Woda
- 4) A.K. Barnes

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Do you know any word games, brain teasers, jokes or dinosaur facts? Send them to Sid and Sam, along with your name, address and age to:
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CRAZY WORDS

Can you turn the word EAT into FUN in three steps? You can only change one letter at a time. Each time, it has to form a new word.

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LETTERMANIA

FACTOSAURUS

1. Documented by the Smithsonian Institution, the factosaurus is a prehistoric creature that lived in the Cretaceous period. It was a bipedal dinosaur with a long neck and a small head. It was known for its ability to communicate with its family members using a series of low-frequency sounds. The factosaurus was a herbivore and ate a variety of plants and fruits. It was a social animal and lived in groups called herds. The factosaurus was a popular attraction at the Lettermania Zoo. It was a favorite of the children and the adults alike. The factosaurus was a very intelligent creature and was able to learn tricks from its trainers. It was a very friendly creature and was always happy to interact with its visitors. The factosaurus was a very important part of the Lettermania Zoo and was a source of pride for the staff and the visitors alike.

Crazy Words:
EAT
FAT
FAN
FUN

Smilin'
Sam's
Joke-O-Rama

Stop me if you
know this one:

Why are frogs
so happy?

ANSWERS:

Sid the Owl's Famous Brain Teasers: 1. Roy Kewin Lives in New York 2. Colin A. Fair lives in California 3. Earl Wade lives in Delaware 4. A.K. Barnes lives in Nebraska
Smilin' Sam's Joke-O-Rama: Because they eat whatever bugs them.

Lettermania: BRACHIOSAURUS

Damon's Story

A BLIND BOY
TAKES ON THE
SEEING WORLD

by Ellen R. Mednick



Damon Fibraio, 13, of Woodbridge, NJ, is just like a lot of other eighth graders. He takes a bus to school each day, loves comic books, music, and computers, and worries about what other kids think about him.

"I just don't want anyone to say I'm a nerd," Damon explained. "Sometimes I think the kids pick on me because I get extra help. I just wish they understood how much longer everything takes because I can't see."

Damon was born with a very rare eye disease which makes him almost completely blind. His central or front vision has been destroyed by the disease. But he does have a small amount of side vision. Dr. Anthony Caputo, Damon's eye doctor, told CONTACT.

Damon lives with his mom, dad, three brothers, a sister, a dog, some fish and three birds—Dexter, Blue and Pinhead. He has the normal chores to do: Take out the garbage ("It's a smelly job!"), make his bed and keep his room clean.



Above: Damon and his brothers spend a lot of time horsing around. Here Damon tries to beat his brother James at handwrestling.

Computer Whiz

Each day when he travels on the bus to Fords Middle School, Damon brings along his computer—the Versabraille. “It’s just like carrying around a 10-pound pencil!” Damon told CONTACT.

The Versabraille is a portable word processor designed to use braille. Braille is a special language developed for the blind. It’s made up of patterns of raised dots which represent different letters of the alphabet. Braille-users use the tips of their fingers to read the dots.

Most blind people know braille, but a book written in braille can be heavy and bulky. For example, it takes 22 volumes to translate a pocket dictionary into braille. But the Versabraille can store tens of thousands of braille characters on a lightweight data cassette.

In school, Damon uses the Versabraille



Soccer is one of the easiest sports for kids with limited vision to play. Damon’s dad coaches the soccer team. Before the game, Mr. Fibraio gives a pep talk to the players. Left: Damon’s position is fullback.



for all his work. Since the computer can store information, it acts as Damon’s electronic notebook. When Damon’s computer is hooked up to another Versabraille, his teacher can feed in a ditto master, and Damon will receive the information in braille. It’s his link to the teacher and to the class as a whole. (For more about how computers help blind people, see box.)

Facing Obstacles

Unfortunately, machines like Versabraille can’t help people with severe vision problems overcome all the many obstacles they face. There are many things sighted people take for granted which are often very difficult for the blind. Try to imagine what it’s like to be blind. Think about trying to get across a room, finding your clothes for school, or brushing your teeth. Think about playing softball or basketball.

Everything takes longer to do. And often blind people have to work twice as hard as people who can see.

“Lots of the kids complain when I get half as much homework as they do,” Damon explained. “Or, that I don’t have to do the map work. But how can I do map work, when I can’t see the map?!” ➡

Being blind has never stopped Damon from trying to make a team. The two sports easiest for kids with some limited sight are soccer and basketball. That's because the balls are bigger than in other sports. And in soccer, the white ball shows up well on the dark green grass.

"When Damon said he wanted to play basketball, the school didn't want him to join the squad," his mom told CONTACT. But Damon and his family insisted. And Damon learned to dribble the ball and shoot baskets.

"Today Damon can jump off the high diving board at the pool. You should have seen people's faces when he tried that!" said Mrs. Fibraio.

"I raised him the same as the other kids," his dad said. "And I think it worked. We knew we had to push him, if he was ever going to live in the real world."

Making Friends

Many blind kids have trouble being accepted by kids with sight. Being part of a group is important to all children. But since blind kids can't always take part in the same sports and games, they often feel left out and lonely.

"It really hurts when the kids tease Damon," Beth Abramson explained. She is an education counselor who works with Damon and other blind children.

"One time Damon was sitting at the lunch table in the cafeteria. He had his sandwich in front of him. Then suddenly, some kids took away his



Above: Damon and his parents and brothers and sister are very close.

Left: Damon has been playing the piano since he was five. He reads music in braille. Who's his favorite singer? The "piano man"—Billy Joel.

sandwich. Since he can't see, Damon hadn't even realized that the other kids had grabbed his lunch. He just kept searching for it," Mrs. Abramson said.

"My Bodyguard"

"I don't have a lot of friends," Damon told us. "But I do have one special friend. He's big and I'm small. I'm better in science than he is. So my friend is my bodyguard and I'm his tutor."

Damon explained that there's one good thing about not seeing too well. "I'm color blind and blind to what people look like or dress like."

And that is a gift that not all people have. You see, for Damon Fibraio, it's how beautiful a person is on the inside that counts.





Above: The Versabraille makes doing school-work much easier for Damon and other kids with vision problems.

Below: Damon is all smiles when his team scores a goal. He may be blind, but there's nothing dark about his life.



Machines that See

Computers have changed the lives of blind people like Damon. These machines allow people with vision problems to work on their own, without having to rely on others.

Damon uses the Versabraille as a word processor for taking notes, doing homework and writing reports. First, he types in information on a keyboard that's in braille. He can then read back the material himself, using a special plastic readout strip on the machine's top. The information is written in braille.

Using a portable printer, Damon can either print out a braille copy or a regular typewritten copy, which he can hand in to his teacher.

Another of the new computer products for the blind is the Kurzweil Reading Machine (KRM). The KRM, which can read any printed page, is really two machines in one. First, a computer scans the words on the page. Then a voice synthesizer speaks those same words out loud. Since the KRM costs \$40,000, most are found only in libraries and schools.

Lori Converso is a computer specialist who has helped train Damon and other blind students to use the Versabraille and KRM. "Blind kids growing up with the new technology will find many more doors open to them," she told CONTACT. And many blind children are so good at using computers that they're choosing computer science as a career.

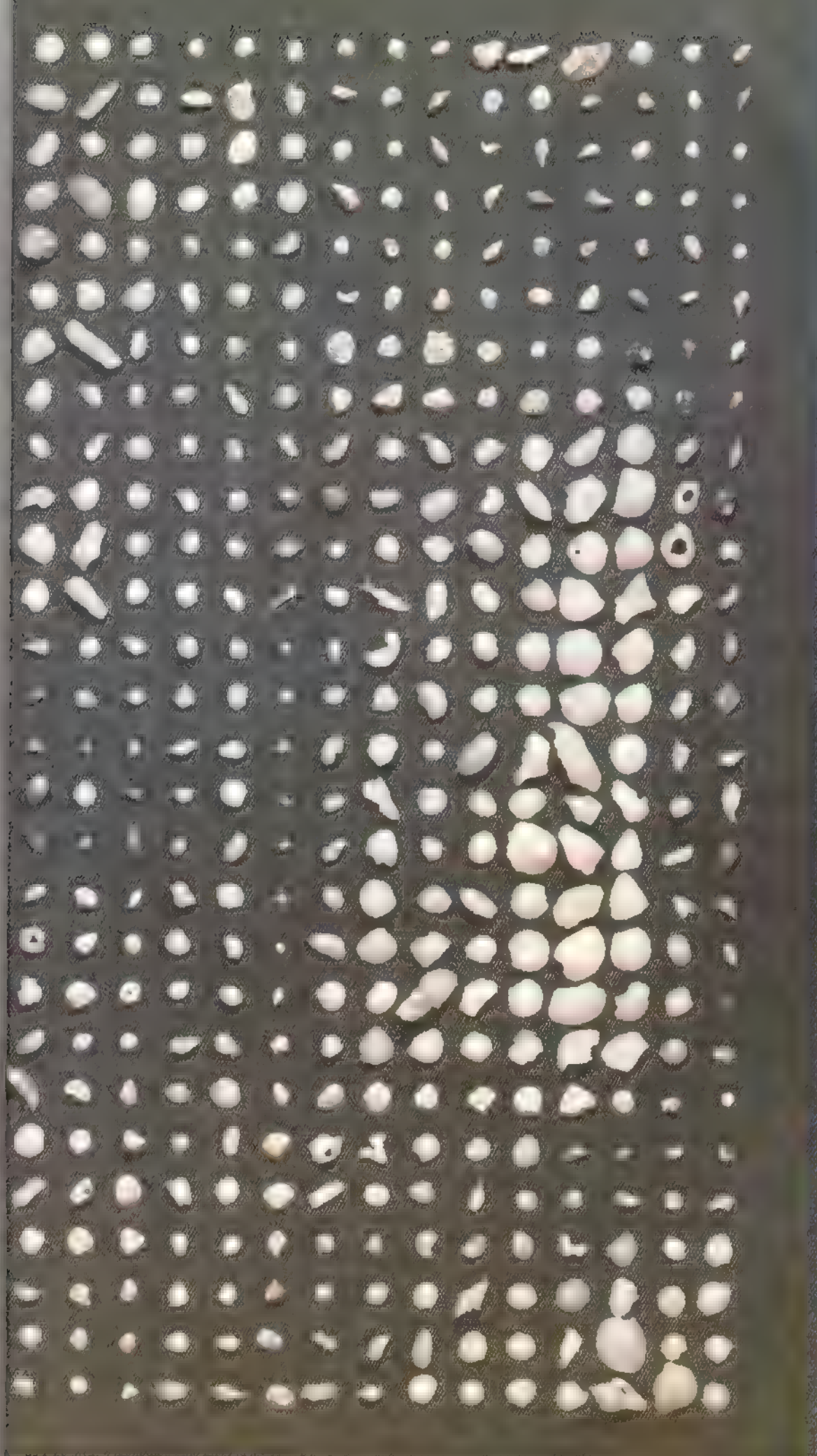
Helping Out

Do you want to find out more about people with vision problems? Here are two free booklets: *What Do You Do When You See a Blind Person?* and *A Different Way of Seeing*. They'll help you understand blind people better. Just send a postcard with your name and address to:

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

1510100420

P.O.S.T. 15



Can you find the face on this page? You won't find it by looking at it up close. In fact, the only way to see this face is to step way back.

Ken Knowlton made this seashell puzzle for the Exploratorium, a museum in San Francisco, CA. Here's how it works. Have someone hold the maga-

zine while you walk about 25 feet back. Presto! You see a picture of a famous scientist.

If you don't know who he is, here's a hint: He is famous for his work under water. Maybe that's why the artist made the face out of shells!

Answer on 61n Did It! page.

WUOLIS
THIST

THE BLOODHOUND GANG

The Case of the Disappearing Designs

by Decky Cheston



“Quick, Vikki!” said Skip. “Get your boots on! I can hardly wait to try out my new Race King!”

The Race King was the newest craze in sleds: it was supposed to be the fastest ever!

“Is this sled really that good?” asked Ricardo, winding a thick scarf around his neck.

“I don’t know,” said Skip. “Thompson Toys just came out with it last month.”

“That’s where you’re wrong, young man,” said a booming voice at the door. “The Race King was designed by Fun Factory,” said the man, “of which I am president.”

“Grayson Bramble!” said Vikki, shaking the visitor’s hand. “Pleased to meet you. Fun Factory makes some terrific toys!”

“Yes,” said Skip. “But what do you mean you designed the Race King? It says Thompson Toys right here on the runner.”

“Well,” Bramble replied. “Thompson Toys certainly produced the sled. But only after the design was stolen from Fun Factory. Someone in my company gave the plans to Thompson Toys and I want you to track that person down!”

The Gang Is Game

As Grayson Bramble drove the trio to the Fun Factory building, the Bloodhound

Gang learned that plans for other toys had also been stolen. Two other Fun Factory ideas—Debby Dimples, a lifelike baby doll, and Car-azy, a battery-powered convertible—were now made by Thompson Toys!

“So, you think someone from inside is stealing the designs and selling them to the competition,” said Vikki. “But how?”

“Good question,” said Bramble as they pulled up in front of the Fun Factory building. “As you’ll see, our security system is airtight.”

Vikki, Skip and Ricardo followed Grayson Bramble into the lobby, which was monitored by three TV cameras. The young people were all required to wear badges and sign in at a desk before moving past the security guards.

But security was even tighter for people leaving the building. The Bloodhound Gang saw employees being searched from head to toe—even purses and briefcases were opened!

“So you see,” said Bramble as he took the sleuths to his office. “It would be impossible for someone to sneak out with the designs.”

In his office, Bramble introduced the Gang to Calvin Spinner, a vice president. They also met Darell Shaw, one of the toy designers.

“Shaw looks kind of nervous, doesn’t he?” Skip whispered to Ricardo.

"We're working on a new board game now," Spinner was saying, "and naturally, we're worried that the plans are going to fall into the wrong hands."

"Darell here has been working on the game," said Bramble. "How are things going, Darell?"

"I expect to have the design completed soon," Shaw replied, fidgeting in his seat.

"And now," said Bramble to the Bloodhound Gang, "I'll have Calvin show you around our factory. I just have to talk to him for a minute. Why don't you wait in his office?"

Spinner's office was cozy—he even had a hotplate which was warming a pot of tea. On one bookshelf stood an odd assortment of items—some steel wool, a bottle of vinegar, and glue.

"Wow," said Skip, "I can't believe we're actually going to see the inside of the Fun Factory!"

"I don't know," said Ricardo. "It'll be neat to see where they make the toys, but I don't see how it's going to help us catch the thief."

"Here's an idea," said Vikki. "What if there are two workers in on the theft?"

"Yes!" said Skip. "Suppose one of the guards was paid to look the other way while a certain person passed by—carrying stolen designs!"

Vikki turned to Ricardo. "I have an idea," she said. "While Mr. Spinner takes Skip on a tour of the plant, why don't you stake out the security guard station. I'll see if I can get the past month's videotapes taken by those TV cameras."

When Spinner returned, he took Skip through the lobby and out to the factory building.

"Terrific," said Skip, as a guard found a comic book concealed under his shirt. "Just testing you." The guard also found some blank papers stuffed inside Spinner's coat pocket.

Foul Play

The next two hours were uneventful. Skip enjoyed being at the factory, but Ricardo practically fell asleep watching people go in and out of the lobby. And all Vikki got for watching the videotapes was a case of sore eyes.

At noon, they all met in the main lobby.

"Well, this has been a wasted morning," Ricardo complained.

Suddenly, the quiet of the lobby was broken

by the sounds of a man yelling. They turned to see a security guard wrestling with someone.

"Better get Mr. Bramble down here!" said the guard to Spinner. "We caught this guy trying to sneak out some plans in his sock!"

It was Darell Shaw—with the designs for the new board game!

"So that's why you've been acting nervous lately!" said Bramble when he arrived in the lobby. "You're the spy for Thompson Toys!"

"No!" Shaw protested. "I've been nervous because I've been under such pressure to get the game finished on time! I've been taking the plans home to work on them!"

"A likely story," said Bramble, reaching for the telephone. "I'm calling Detective Trowbridge."

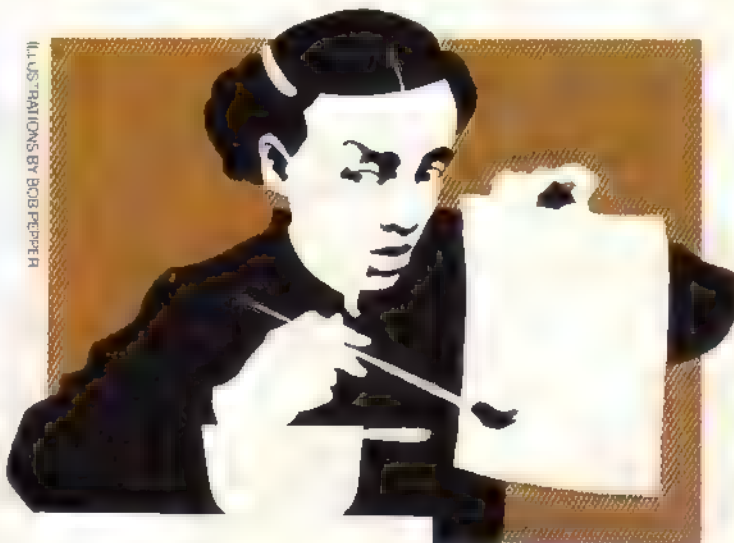
"Why don't you tell him to meet us all here at five o'clock instead," said Ricardo. "Mr. Spinner, may we use your office?"

Cooking A Crook

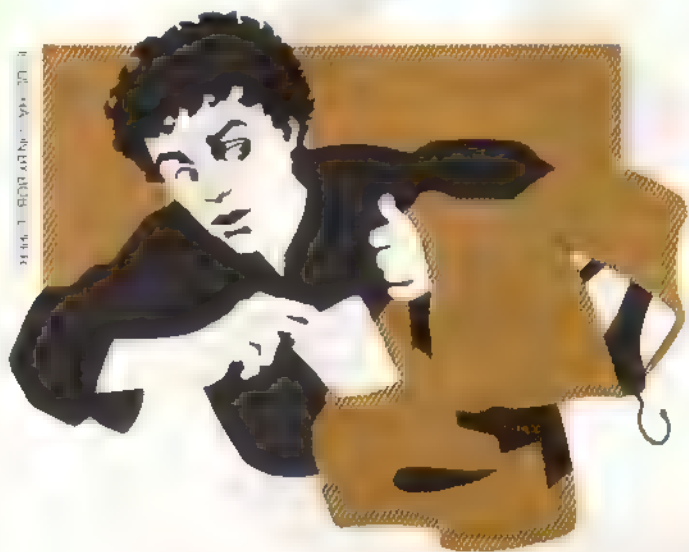
At five o'clock, everyone was gathered in Spinner's office. "Cooking us a little supper, Vikki?" asked Detective Trowbridge.

Vikki did have something strange boiling on Spinner's hotplate. On one burner, a jar of steel wool steeped in vinegar was warming in a pan of water. On the other, there was a pot of tea.

"Hey!" said Darell Shaw suddenly. He was pointing to Spinner's desk, on which Ricardo had spread out four large sheets of paper. There was some faint gray writing on the pages, and—



ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB PEPPER



some sketches. As they watched, the print was getting darker.

"Those are the plans for my game!" shouted Shaw. "They're appearing right in front of my eyes! Only, this isn't my writing. These are copies!"

"Wait a minute," said Bramble to Ricardo. "Aren't these the pages you asked me to keep in my office this afternoon? But they were blank!"

"They were also blank when we went through the security check this morning—isn't that right, Mr. Spinner?" said Skip.

Spinner's hand quickly went to his pocket, and pulled out some pieces of paper.

"We don't need to check those," said Ricardo. "I pulled a switch on you this afternoon. What you've got in your pocket really are blank pages. I took these," he pointed to the desk, "from your suitcoat."

Spinner backed towards the door. Detective Trowbridge blocked his way.

"Mr. Bramble," said Vikki. "If you examine the security videotapes for the past month, you'll find that Calvin has often gone through the checkpoint with blank papers in his pocket."

"Blank pages that were really stolen designs," said Bramble. "But how did he do it?"

"Invisible ink," said Ricardo. "Anyone can make it."

"Let me show you," said Vikki. "You take some clean, dry steel wool, put it in a jar, and cover it with vinegar. Then you put the jar in a

pan of hot water." Vikki pointed to the hotplate.

"On the other burner, I've boiled four tea bags in a half cup of water. Both these solutions are cool now, so I'm going to mix them."

Vikki poured equal amounts of the solutions into a bowl and stirred the mixture. "If you add a little glue, this stuff will flow from a fountain pen just like regular ink. Or, you can just dip a paintbrush in it like this."

Vikki brushed a few strokes onto a piece of paper.

"But I don't see anything!" said Bramble.

"Now you don't," said Ricardo. "But later you will. You see, chemical action of the vinegar and the iron in the steel wool produces two substances called hydrogen and iron acetate. From the tea you get tannin. Mixed together, they produce a chemical, which is just about colorless."

"Yes," said Vikki. "But when the ink is dry and exposed to the air, it changes to another chemical, which is black."

"But," said Skip, "it takes anywhere from three to 24 hours for the change. So, while the ink is drying, it's invisible!"

"Excuse me, Mr. Spinner," said a secretary, poking her head in the door. "The president of Thompson Toys is on line one."

"Tell him he can reach Mr. Spinner at the station house," said Detective Trowbridge, leading Calvin out the door.

"Well," said Bramble. "I guess Mr. Spinner and Thompson Toys made quite a team."

"Yeah," said Skip. "But as it turned out, they just didn't have the right chemistry." ❧

**Watch for next month's
Bloodhound Gang
mystery!**



Dear CONTACT.

In a recent issue, you say that the largest pumpkin ever grown weighed 612 pounds. According to an article in the *Bergen Record* [a newspaper in New Jersey], there is a pumpkin that weighs 671 pounds.

Diane Wieceoreck
Elmwood, NJ

Wow! That would make some pumpkin pie. Maybe someone will make it into a movie: *The Pumpkin That Ate Cleveland!* Thanks for sending us the article. It must be a new record.

Review News

Dear CONTACT.

Not all of your readers have computers, so I was wondering if you could write reviews about video games. I'd be very grateful.

Carry Cybulski
Hamtrack, MI

You're in luck! Starting with this issue, we've changed Reviews to include books and videos that we think will be hot with readers. Send us your suggestions for new books and videos you think other CONTACT readers might like. Of course, we'll still be reviewing the latest and the best in software for your home computer.

Animal News

Dear CONTACT.

I liked your article about zoo dentists (Jan./Feb. '87). I didn't know that sticks and bones could help cougars and other wild animals clean their teeth. Please keep doing stories about animals.

Tina Rushing
Biscoe, NC

We try to have at least one animal feature in each issue of CONTACT. For instance, on page

12 you probably noticed a story on nocturnal animals. What we'd like to know is if you're reading this at night, does that make you a nocturnal creature, too?



April Fool

In our April issue, we asked, "What's the neatest April Fool joke that was ever played on you—or that you played on someone else?" Here are some of our favorite answers:

I was feeling a little sad so somebody gave me a rose. While I was looking at it, it squirted me in the face. That cheered me up!

Tracy Ann Bopp
Miller Place, NY

I sent a letter to my friend. It said it was from the Environmental Protection Agency and that my friend was a threat to the environment. It was signed April F. Ool.

Anthony Hartman
Lewiston, NY

Last year my mom thought I was too involved in the afternoon soap opera, *General Hospital*. On paper that looked like my school's stationery, she wrote a letter to me saying that there were going to be new school hours. The school day would end at 4:22. I was furious because that would mean missing my favorite soap opera. Then I opened the envelope with the "new bus schedule." It said, "April Fool!"

Michelle Wasserman
Plainview, NY

My mom said if I was foolish and irresponsible, I'd wake up with the "fool measles." On April 1, when I woke up, I had dots all over my face. During the night my mother had dotted my face with a red marker.

John Parker
Millmont, PA

My sister was supposed to pick up my grandmother by 3:00, but I changed the time on every clock to 6:00. I got her up and said it was 6:00. She started running in circles. I stopped her and yelled, "April Fool!!"

Tamika Lane
Adel, GA

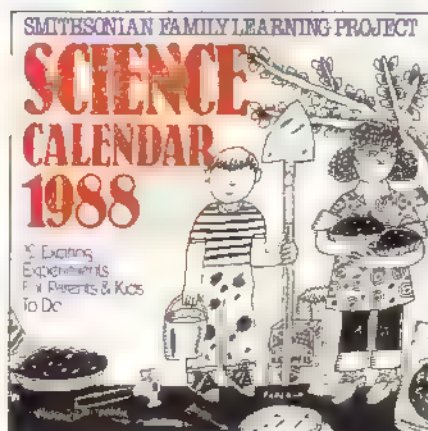
We Want Mail!

Dear Readers,

We love hearing from you. The questions, ideas and complaints we get help us make CONTACT a better magazine. So why not drop us a line? We can't answer every letter, but we do read them all. Send your mail to:

3-2-1 CONTACT
P.O. Box 40
Vernon, NJ 07462

Reviews

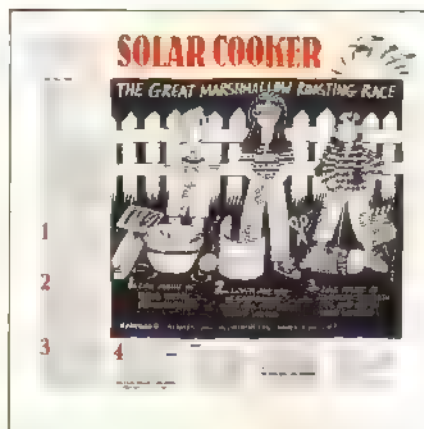


A Year of Fun

Science Calendar 1988

Smithsonian Family Learning Project
Galison Books, \$10.00

All calendars will tell you the days of the week and the dates of important holidays. But this calendar will also give you something fun to do for a whole year. Each month features a different science project and a bunch of activities that will keep you busy for days. Our favorite was the instructions for making your very own ice cream machine. Other projects include building your own camera, shrimp farming, and learning about microscopic animals that live in your house (yuccch!). *Science Calendar 1988* will keep you busy all year long.



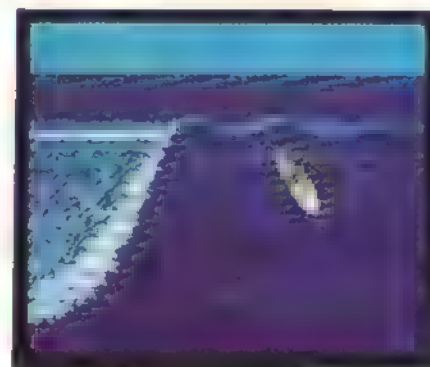
California Computer

California Games

Epyx Software
(for Commodore 64, \$35; also for the Apple II)

Everything is different in California—the weather, the language, even the sports games. On this new computer disk from Epyx, you can play some of those games including surfing, skateboarding, bicycle motocross, flying disc and roller skating. You may never have seen these events or even heard of some of them, but believe us—they're a lot of fun.

You can play one or all eight events and one to eight people can



take part. The computer keeps track of everyone's score. Points are awarded based on the difficulty of the stunts you try and how well you do them...Action is controlled by joystick. This will be one of the best party games of the year for groups of all ages.

—Phil Wiswell



Dubbles, Dubbles

The Unbelievable Dubble Book

(with the Bubble Thing) by John Cassidy with David Stein / Klutz Press, \$9.95

This is a two-part package: a book, and a bubble maker called the *Bubble Thing* which makes the most incredible bubbles we've ever seen. Bubbles are no big deal, you say? Then you've never seen monster bubbles like these, five feet across.

The book contains directions for using the *Bubble Thing* and it

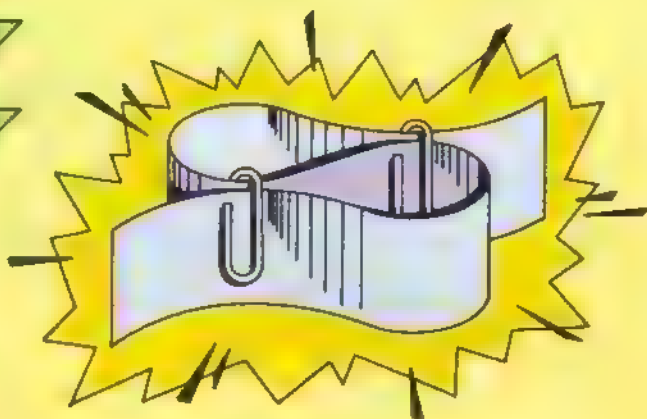
explains some of the history and science of bubbles. (Did you know Isaac Newton experimented with soap bubbles?) You can also learn how to make bubbles with tin cans, wire hangers and even your bare hands. And after playing with soap and water for a couple of hours, your parents won't tell you to wash your hands!



BLACKSTONES

Magic Page

It's easy to make two paperclips join together. But in this magic trick you do it without touching either clip!



1. Take a piece of paper, and fold it like the drawing on the left:

2. Then put the paperclips on the paper in the same way as in the drawing.

3. Pull hard on both ends of the paper. *Make sure that the clips aren't pointed at anyone's eyes.* The clips will fly off the paper, and hook up!

By the way, you can use this trick to amaze your friends and family. But don't try it on a *topologist* (top-AH-low-jist). Topologists are mathematicians who spend their days studying surfaces, like the curved piece of paper in this trick. They like to amaze their friends and family too!



William B. Jones

MATHNET

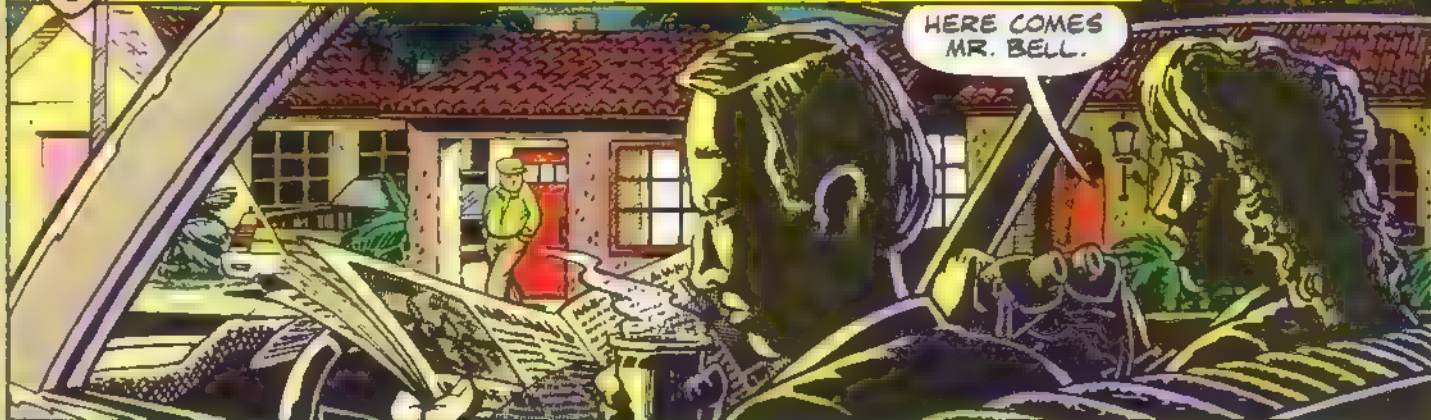
TM
WRITTEN BY ERIC WEINER

THE FOLLOWING
COMIC IS A
FIB... BUT
IT'S SHORT.

"DOUBLE TROUBLE"

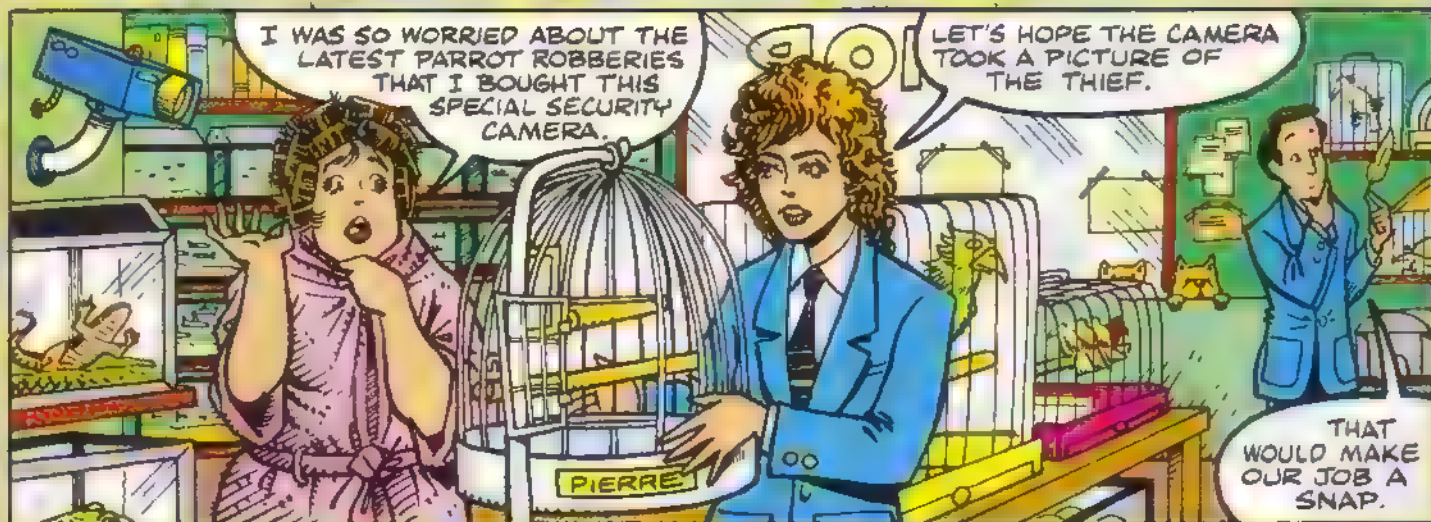
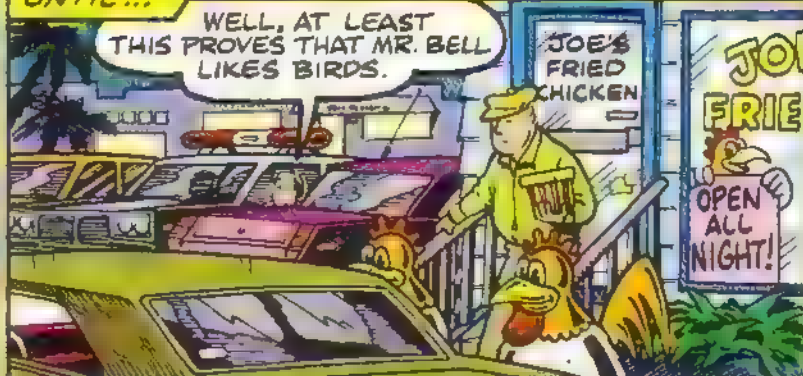


"I'M KATE MONDAY. MY PARTNER, GEORGE FRANKLY, AND I WORK FOR MATHNET. ON FRIDAY NIGHT, WE WERE ON A STAKE OUT IN WEST L.A. ..."

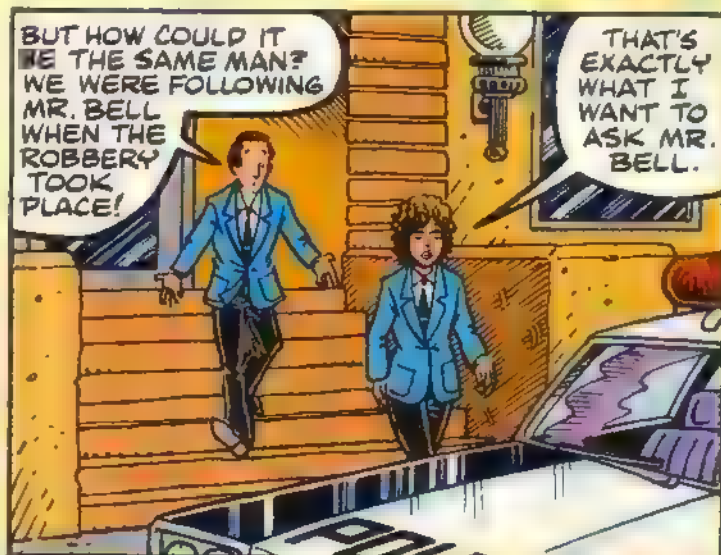
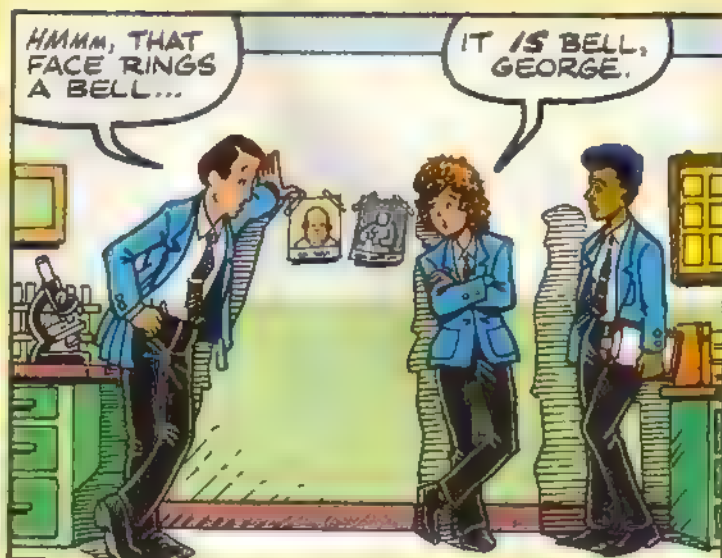
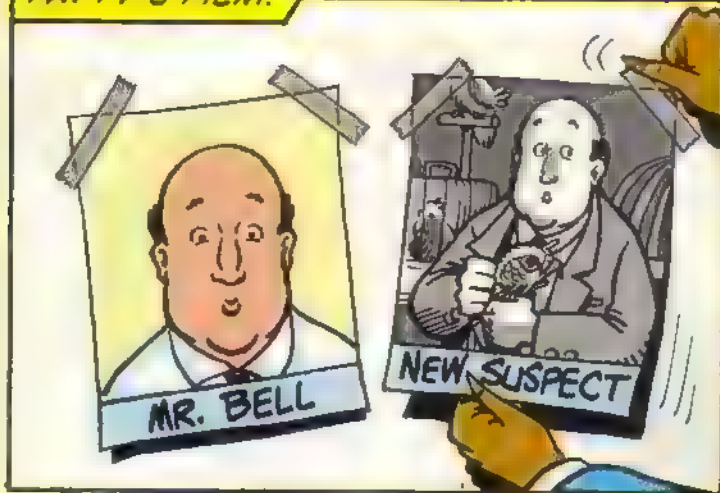


"IN ONE WEEK, THREE PRIZE PARROTS HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM LOCAL PET SHOPS. WE SUSPECTED MR. BELL. WE FOLLOWED HIM FOR 20 MINUTES. UNTIL ..."

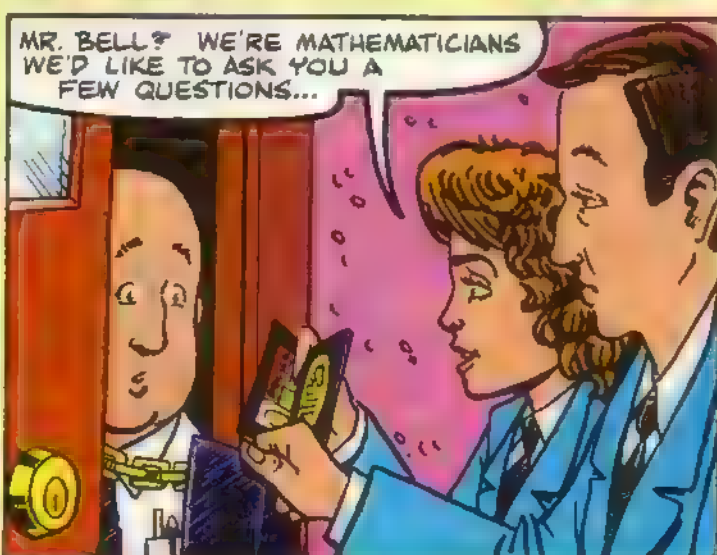
WELL, AT LEAST THIS PROVES THAT MR. BELL LIKES BIRDS.

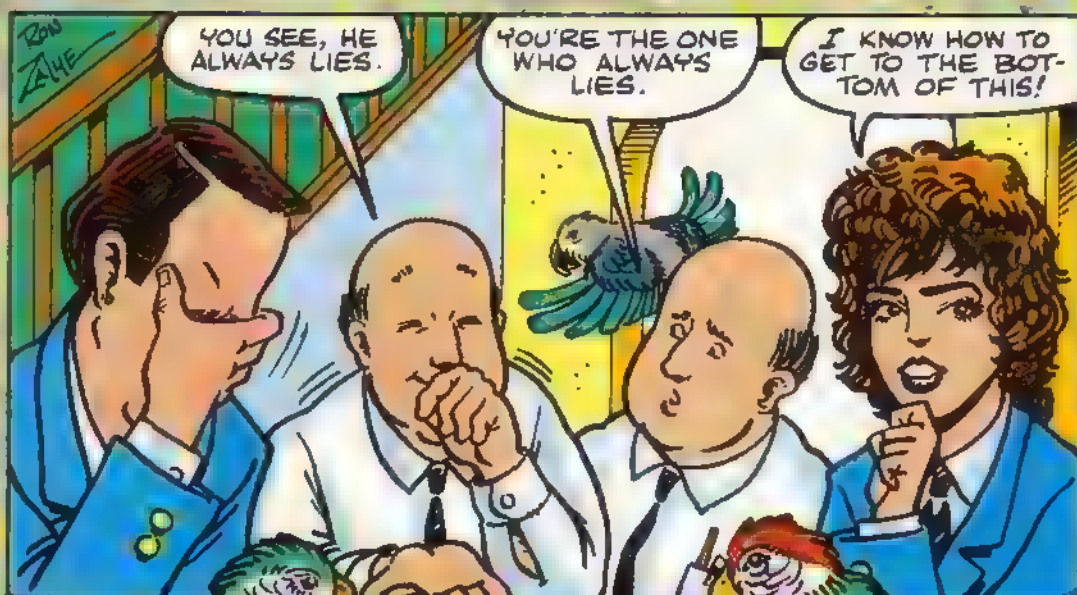
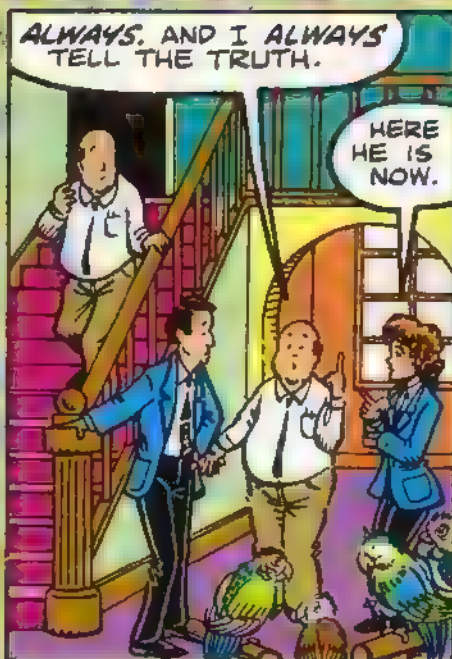
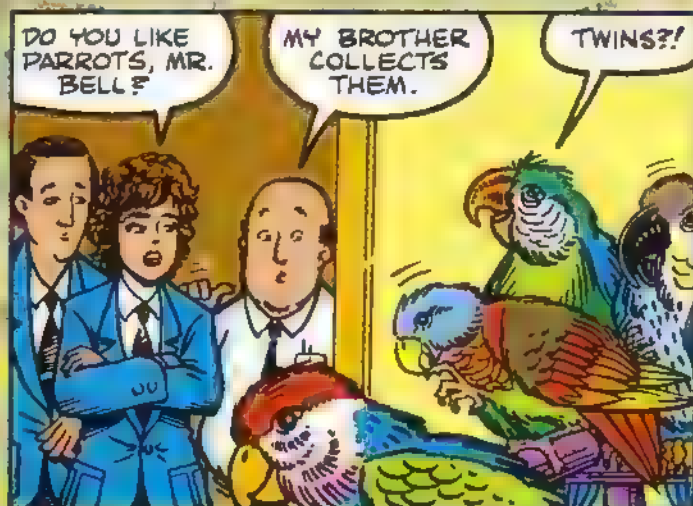
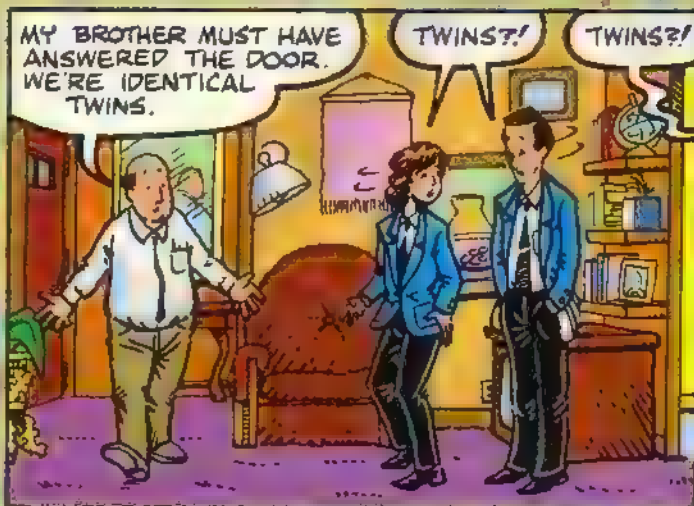


"THE NEXT DAY, OUR LAB DEVELOPED PATTY'S FILM."



THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO ASK MR. BELL.





BY ASKING ONE MORE QUESTION, KATE FIGURED OUT WHICH BELL WAS TELLING THE TRUTH. CAN YOU THINK OF A QUESTION THAT WOULD DO THE TRICK? IF YOU'RE STUMPED, TURN THIS PAGE UP-SIDE DOWN.



THE END

THE TRICK IS TO ASK A QUESTION WHOSE ANSWER YOU ALREADY KNOW. FOR INSTANCE, YOU COULD ASK, "ARE YOU A PARROT?" THE BROTHER THAT ALWAYS LIES WOULD ANSWER "YES!" THE BROTHER THAT ALWAYS TELLS THE TRUTH WOULD SAY "NO."

ANSWER:

GETTING MR GLITCH

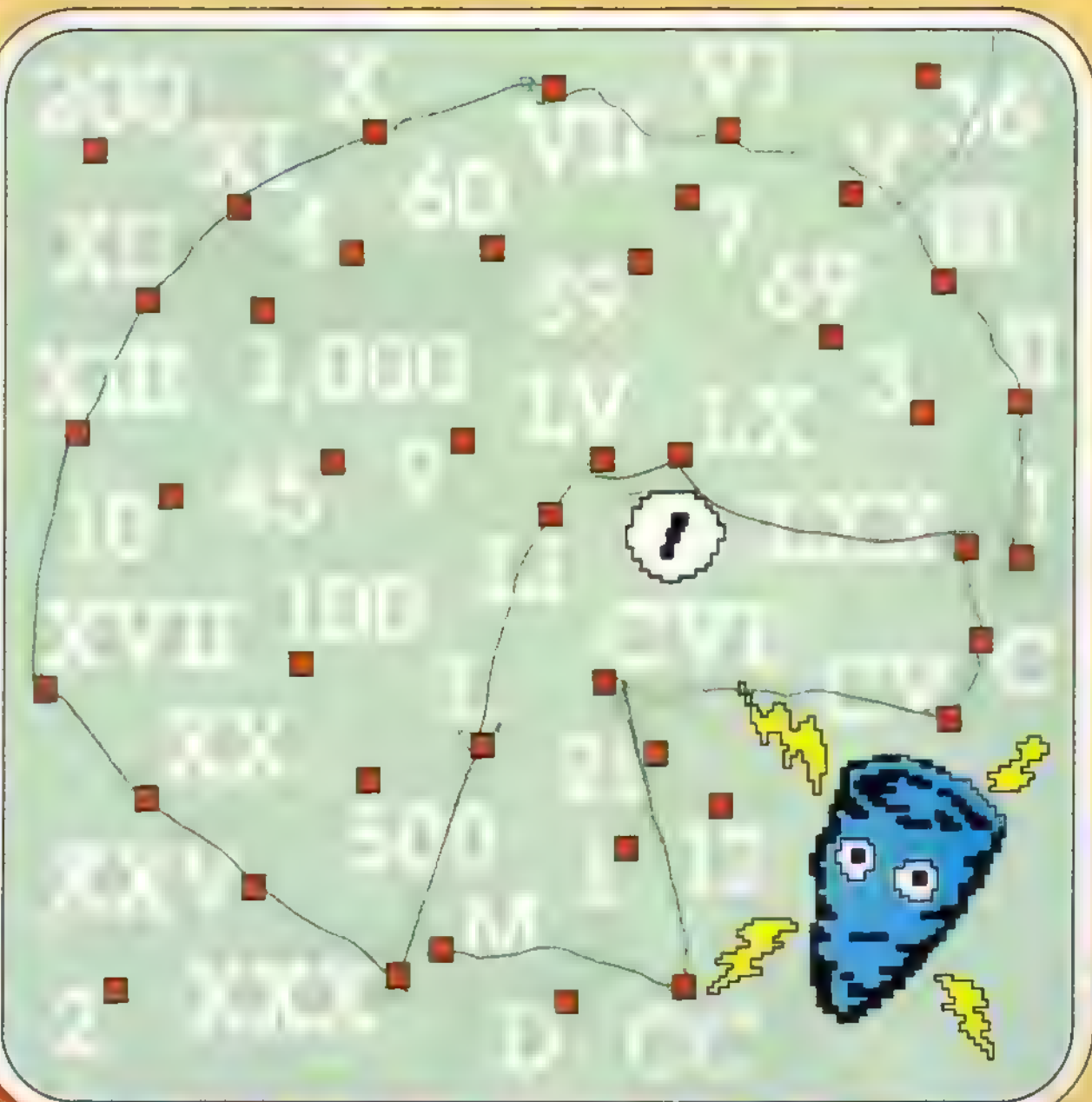
I	= 1
V	= 5
X	= 10
L	= 50
C	= 100
D	= 500
M	= 1,000

MATHKID! MATHKID! Hold on to your togas. With your help, a certain mystery person finally gets to eat Mr. Glitch! Who is it? It's easy to find out! Just take your pencil and "rome" around the page to connect the dots. You've got

to move from the smallest Roman numeral to the next largest and so on. (We've thrown in some Arabic numerals to do "a number" on you.)

(HINT: In case you're rusty on your Roman numerals, the chart will refresh your memory.)

Answer on the Did It! page.



William S. ...

Any Questions?

How do penguins live at the South Pole without freezing?

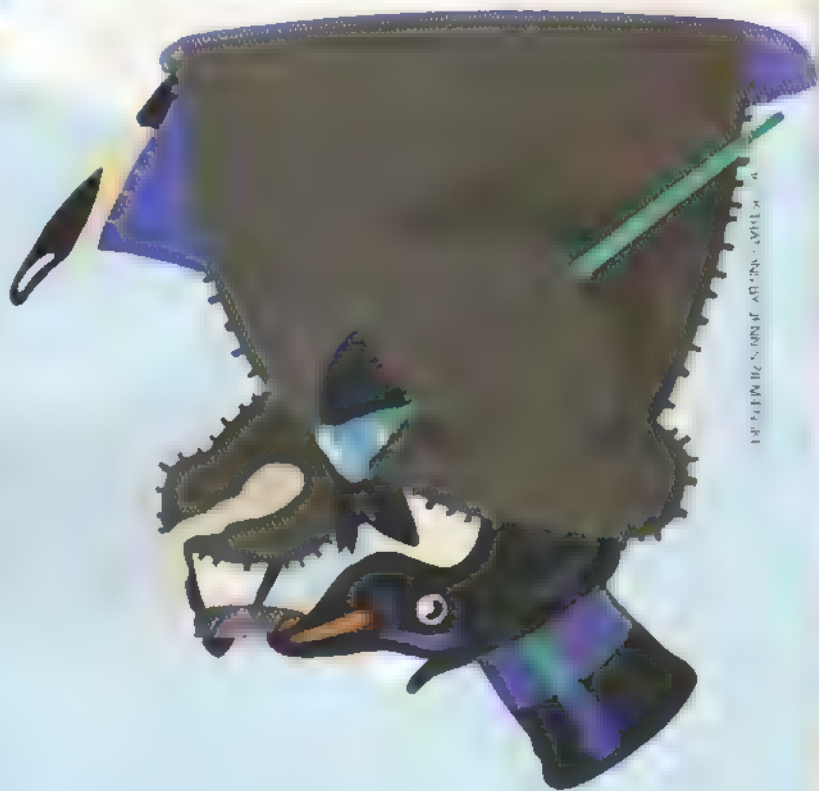
All penguins live in the southern half of the world. But not even half of them ever set a flipper in Antarctica. There are 17 kinds of penguins. Only seven kinds live near the South Pole. The rest live farther away, where temperatures are at least a little bit warmer.

But all kinds of penguins, no matter where they live, are built to keep warm. Beneath their feathers, adult penguins have thick layers of fat to keep warm in cold air and cold water.

Newborn penguins are covered with *down*—tiny, fluffy feathers. At first, the down is not thick enough to keep a chick warm. Its parents protect it from the cold by sitting right on top of it! When the baby penguin is about four weeks old, its down grows thicker. It is ready to leave the nest.

Eventually, a young penguin's down will be replaced by tightly-packed feathers. By the time it is three years old, a penguin will also have all the fat it needs to stay toasty warm.

Question sent in by Donavan Vartorella, Norwalk, OH



How does natural gas form under the ground?

Believe it or not, natural gas is made from the decayed remains of sea plants and animals. Millions of years ago, oceans were loaded with living things. As these critters died, they sank to the ocean floor. There they piled up in huge amounts. Mud and dirt, called sediment, piled up on top of them.

Over millions of years, great chemical changes took place on the ocean floor. The sediment turned into hard rock. The plants and animals turned into the natural gas and oil that people drill for today. Later, some of the ancient oceans drained away. So now oil and gas are found under land, too.

If you think you can get rich by pressing dead plants together to get fuel, forget it. It takes special conditions and loads of time for gas and oil to form. That's why it's so important to save as much natural gas and oil as possible. We're using it a lot faster than nature can produce it.

Question sent in by Betsy Powell, Cordell, OK



Do you have a question that no one seems able to answer? Why not ask us? Send your question, along with your name, address, and age, to:

Any Questions?
3-2-1 CONTACT
P.O. Box 40
Vernon, NJ 07462

What causes stars to shoot through the sky and burn out?

When people see a streak of light flash across the sky, they call it a shooting star. But it isn't a star at all. It is a chunk of rock. This rock, called a *meteoroid*, can be as big as a boulder or as small as a grain of sand.

Meteoroids are particles from space, sometimes comets or asteroids. They pass through the earth's atmosphere. When they do, they are moving at very fast speeds. They race through air molecules and this causes friction. The rocks become so hot that they burn up. It is the light from these fiery bursts of energy that you see as shooting stars.

On a clear night you can see about 10 shooting stars every hour. But your chance of spotting shooters are better on certain nights of the year. The last three weeks in December is a very good time for shooting-star gazing.

Question sent in by Eric Hallberg, Boise, ID.

What do bees do during the winter?

Bees start getting ready in spring and summer for the cold weather ahead. During those seasons they make the whole year's supply of honey. Some gets eaten right away. But half the honey is stored for later use—just as squirrels store nuts for winter.

Before the cold sets in, bees have one last job. They must push some bees out of the hive and leave them to starve. It seems cruel, but these bees have to leave so that there will be enough food for the rest. The unlucky ones are a group called *drones*. They cannot help the hive during the winter. Next spring, new drones will be born.

When winter starts, the queen bee and the workers gather in a cluster on the honeycomb. They beat their wings to keep warm. When the weather turns colder, the bees move into even tighter clusters. In a warm spell, they may fly outside. For food, the bees eat the honey stored in the hive. That's their reward for last summer's hard work, when they were as busy as bees!

Question sent in by Barry Thompson, Long Prairie, MN



Basic Training

Ladder Luck

Here's a game program that's hard to top. In fact, the aim of the game is to get to the top of three ladders—before your computer opponent.

At the start of the game, your computer will show you three ladders. During each turn, you get to climb one rung on any ladder. (Your marker is a "Y" and the computer marker is a "C".) Then the computer picks a ladder to climb. The computer can climb on top of your markers and you can climb on top of the computer's. To win, you must get to the top of two of the ladders before the computer.

Joselito Montojo, of Pittsburg, California came up with this program. We think it's a few rungs above the rest.

```

C=C+1
210 IF H2=8 AND N=2 THEN
C=C+1
220 IF H3=8 AND N=3 THEN
C=C+1
230 GOTO 70
240 VTAB 20
250 IF Y>C THEN 280
260 PRINT "THE COMPUTER WON"

270 GOTO 290
280 PRINT "YOU WON"
290 INPUT "PLAY AGAIN Y/N "; R$
300 IF R$="Y" THEN 10
310 END
320 IF N=1 AND H1=8 THEN P=1:
GOTO 390
330 IF N=2 AND H2=8 THEN P=1
GOTO 390
340 IF N=3 AND H3=8 THEN P=1
GOTO 390
350 IF N=1 THEN H1=H1+1: VTAB
14-H1: HTAB 2
360 IF N=2 THEN H2=H2+1: VTAB
14-H2: HTAB 16
370 IF N=3 THEN H3=H3+1: VTAB
14-H3: HTAB 31
380 PRINT P$
390 RETURN
    
```

Apple

```

10 HOME: CLEAR
20 FOR T=1 TO 8
30 VTAB 5+T: PRINT "H"
40 HTAB 15: PRINT "H"
50 HTAB 30: PRINT "H"
60 NEXT T
70 IF Y=2 OR C=2 THEN 240
80 VTAB 20: PRINT "WHICH
LADDER WILL YOU CLIMB?
(1-3)"
90 INPUT N$
100 N=VAL(N$): IF N>3 OR N<1
THEN 80
110 P=0: P$="Y": GOSUB 320
120 IF P=1 THEN 80
130 IF H1=8 AND N=1 THEN
Y=Y+1
140 IF H2=8 AND N=2 THEN
Y=Y+1
150 IF H3=8 AND N=3 THEN
Y=Y+1
160 N=INT(RND(1)*3)+1
170 P=0: P$="C": GOSUB 320
180 IF P=1 THEN 160
190 PRINT CHR$(7)
200 IF H1=8 AND N=1 THEN
    
```

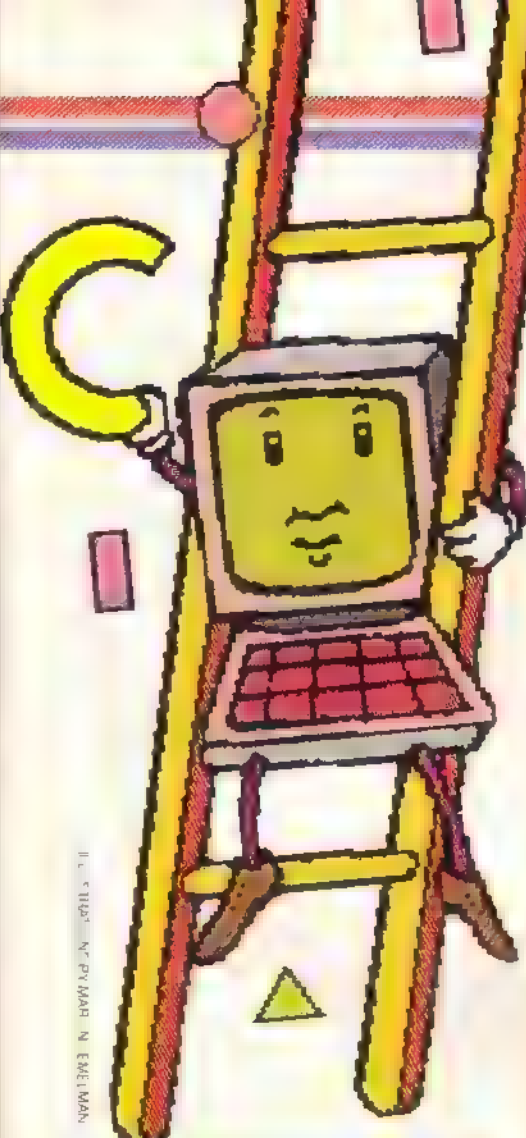



ILLUSTRATION BY PETER N. EDELMAN

Commodore 64/128

```

10 PRINT CHR$(147):CLR
20 POKE 53281,1
30 S=1224:Q=56
40 FOR X=1 TO 16
50 PRINT NEXT X
60 FOR T=1 TO 320 STEP 40
70 POKE S+2+T,Q:Q=Q-1
80 POKE S+8+T,111
90 POKE S+16+T,111
100 POKE S+24+T,111:NEXT T
110 S=1530
120 IF Y=2 OR C=2 THEN 340
130 PRINT CHR$(145);CHR$(145);
140 PRINT TAB(4);"WHICH
  LADDER WILL YOU CLIMB?
  (1-3)"
150 INPUT N$:N=VAL(N$)
160 IF N<1 OR N>3 THEN 130
170 P=0:Q=25:GOSUB 400
180 IF P=1 THEN 130
190 IF H1=8 AND N=1 THEN
  Y=Y+1
200 IF H2=8 AND N=2 THEN
  Y=Y+1

```

```

210 IF H3=8 AND N=3 THEN
  Y=Y+1
220 N=INT(RND(1)*3)+1
250 POKE 53281,7
260 FOR DE=1 TO 500 NEXT DE
270 POKE 53281,1
280 P=0:Q=3:GOSUB 400
290 IF P=1 THEN 220
300 IF H1=8 AND N=1 THEN
  C=C+1
310 IF H2=8 AND N=2 THEN
  C=C+1
320 IF H3=8 AND N=3 THEN
  C=C+1
330 GOTO 120
340 IF Y>C THEN 360
350 PRINT "THE COMPUTER WON
  ":GOTO 370
360 PRINT "YOU WON"
370 INPUT "PLAY AGAIN? Y/N":RS
380 IF RS="Y" THEN 10
390 END
400 IF N=1 AND H1=8 THEN
  P=1:GOTO 470
410 IF N=2 AND H2=8 THEN
  P=1:GOTO 470
420 IF N=3 AND H3=8 THEN
  P=1:GOTO 470
430 IF N=1 THEN T=S-(40*H1)-
  16:H1=H1+1
440 IF N=2 THEN T=S-(40*H2)-
  8:H2=H2+1
450 IF N=3 THEN T=S-(40
  *H3):H3=H3+1
460 POKE T,Q
470 RETURN

```

IDM

```

10 CLS:CLER:WIDTH 80
20 RANDOMIZE TIMER
30 FOR T=1 TO 8
40 LOCATE 15-T,2:PRINT T
50 LOCATE 15-T,10:PRINT "H"
60 LOCATE 15-T,20:PRINT "H"
70 LOCATE 15-T,30:PRINT "H"
80 NEXT T
90 IF Y=2 OR C=2 THEN 250
100 LOCATE 15,39:PRINT "
  "
110 LOCATE 16,1:INPUT "WHICH
  LADDER WILL YOU CLIMB?
  (1-3)":N$
120 N=VAL(N$):IF N>3 OR N<1
  THEN 100
130 P=0:PS="Y":GOSUB 310
140 IF P=1 THEN 100
150 IF H1=8 AND N=1 THEN
  Y=Y+1

```

```

160 IF H2=8 AND N=2 THEN
  Y=Y+1
170 IF H3=8 AND N=3 THEN
  Y=Y+1
180 N=INT(RND(1)*3)+1:BEEP
190 P=0:PS="C":GOSUB 310
200 IF P=1 THEN 180
210 IF H1=8 AND N=1 THEN
  C=C+1
220 IF H2=8 AND N=2 THEN
  C=C+1
230 IF H3=8 AND N=3 THEN
  C=C+1
240 GOTO 90
250 IF Y>C THEN 270
260 LOCATE 18,3:PRINT
  "COMPUTER WON":GOTO 280
270 LOCATE 18,3:PRINT "YOU
  WON"
280 INPUT "PLAY AGAIN? Y/N":RS
290 IF RS="Y" THEN 10
300 END
310 IF N=1 AND H1=8 THEN
  P=1:GOTO 370
320 IF N=2 AND H2=8 THEN
  P=1:GOTO 370
330 IF N=3 AND H3=8 THEN
  P=1:GOTO 370
340 IF N=1 THEN
  H1=H1+1:LOCATE
  15-H1,11:PRINT PS
350 IF N=2 THEN
  H2=H2+1:LOCATE
  15-H2,21:PRINT PS
360 IF N=3 THEN
  H3=H3+1:LOCATE
  15-H3,31:PRINT PS
370 RETURN

```

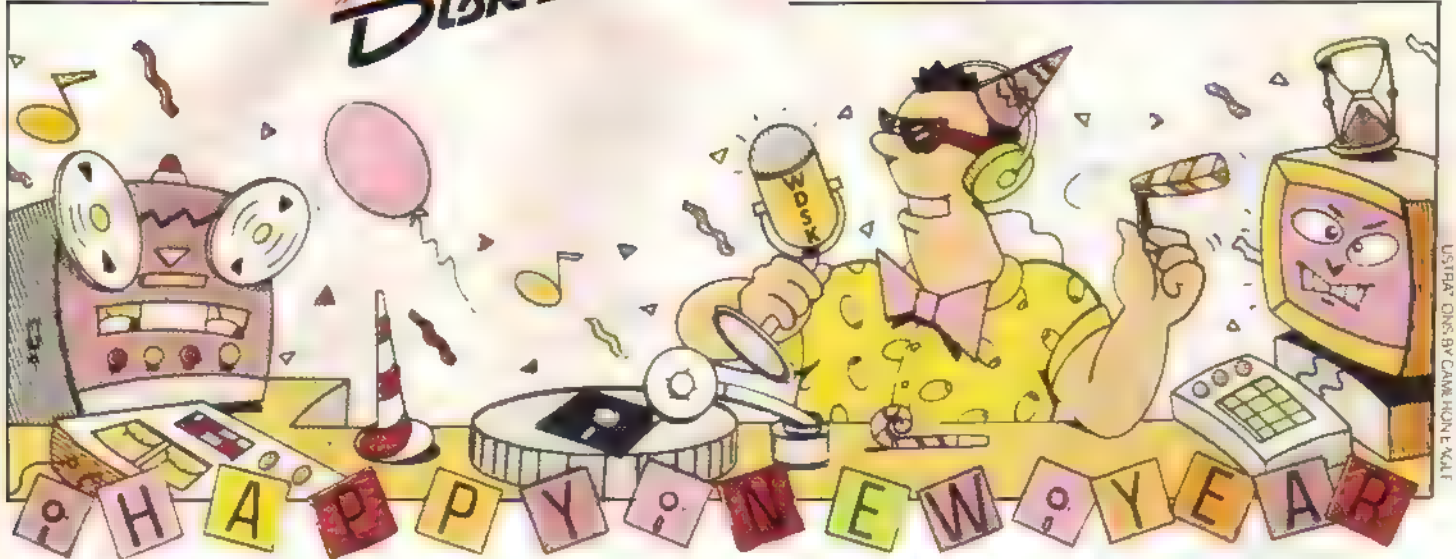
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1 Lincoln Plaza
New York, NY 10023

The Slipped Disk Show



Happy New Year, hackers! This is Slipped Disk, floppy disk jockey and world-famous computer expert, ready for another great year of advice, gossip and cooking hints.

Last year was a great year—I only got washed out to sea by a hurricane once. In honor of the new year, I'm doing something new this month. No, I'm not going to change my socks, I did that last year. This month, I'm going to show you that I'm not just a world-famous computer expert, I'm also a world-famous expert on all kinds of modern, electronic, hi-tech type of stuff. For instance, here's a hi-tech question from **Suzanne Robinson**, 12, of Plattsburgh, New York. Suzanne asks:

"How does an electric eye work?"

Suzanne, if you want to be a world-famous computer expert and hi-tech know-it-all like me, then you have to know how things work. That's why I asked my dog, Floppy, for the answer to your question.

Floppy says that electric eyes are sensitive to light. Some electric eyes produce electricity when light hits them. Other types don't produce electricity. Instead, when light hits them, they allow electricity to flow through a wire.

For example, an electric eye can

be used to open an automatic door. A beam of light is shot across the front of a door so that it hits an electric eye. When you walk towards the door, your body blocks the light. This turns off the electricity being produced by the electric eye, which flips a switch that opens the door.

Electric eyes can be more sensitive than human eyes. They can even react to types of light that we can't see, like infrared and ultraviolet.

Now here's something I can see—another letter. This one is from **Ted Basowski**, 11, of Frankfort, Illinois. Ted wants to know:

"What is a database?"

Well, Ted, date-a-base would be a good name for a dating service for

major league infielders. But a database is something else.

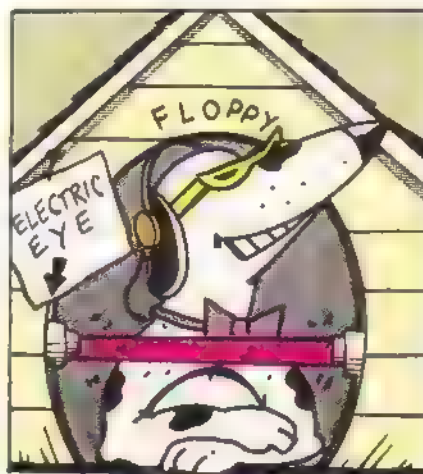
A database is any collection of facts or information. A computer database is stored on floppy disks or in some other type of computer memory. It's like a computerized filing system. A database program lets you get the information you want from the database, and allows you to read it on your computer terminal, print it out, or change it.

A database might be a list of all the customers for a department store, or an entire encyclopedia, or even a list of all the baseball cards in someone's collection. Floppy keeps a database of all his clothes but it's very small since he doesn't wear any.

Floppy's database may be tiny, but the database of great Slipped Disk shows gets bigger every month. If you want to become part of it, send your computer question to:

**The Slipped Disk Show
3-2-1 CONTACT Magazine
1 Lincoln Plaza
New York, NY 10023**

Floppy and I will be back next month. See ya then!



Floppy the Computer Canine's wardrobe courtesy of Mother Nature.

Body Puzzles

There are 22 parts of the body listed here. Both puzzles use the same list.

Word List

ANKLE	HEAD
ARM	HEART
BONES	KNEE
CALF	LIPS
CHEST	MOUTH
CHIN	NOSE
EARS	SCALP
EYES	SHOULDERS
FIST	STOMACH
FOOT	TEETH
HAIR	TOE

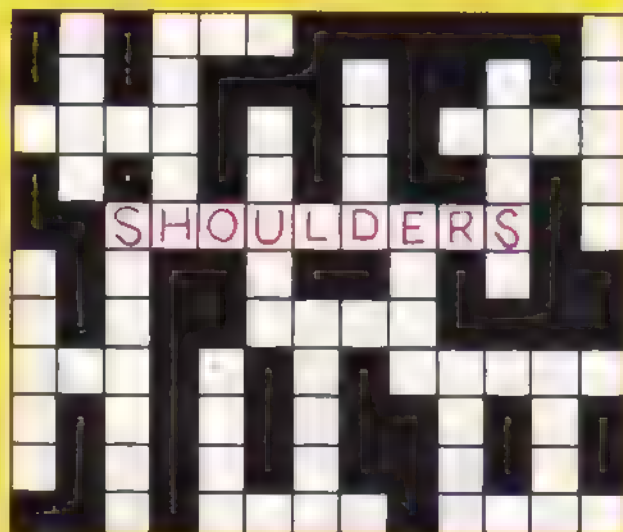
S	P	I	L	S	C	A	L	P
H	H	B	E	T	O	O	F	R
S	T	O	M	A	C	H	I	N
E	A	N	U	M	R	A	P	P
L	Y	E	B	L	H	S	L	H
K	T	S	I	F	D	E	T	F
N	E	O	T	R	A	E	H	N
A	D	S	E	Y	E	N	R	O
C	H	E	S	T	H	K	A	S
N	D	H	T	U	O	M	Y	E

1. Word Hunt

The parts of the body are hidden across, up and down and diagonally. Some of them are backward.

2. Crossword

Figure out how the parts of the body fit into the empty squares. We've done one for you to get you started.



Answers on the Did It! page.

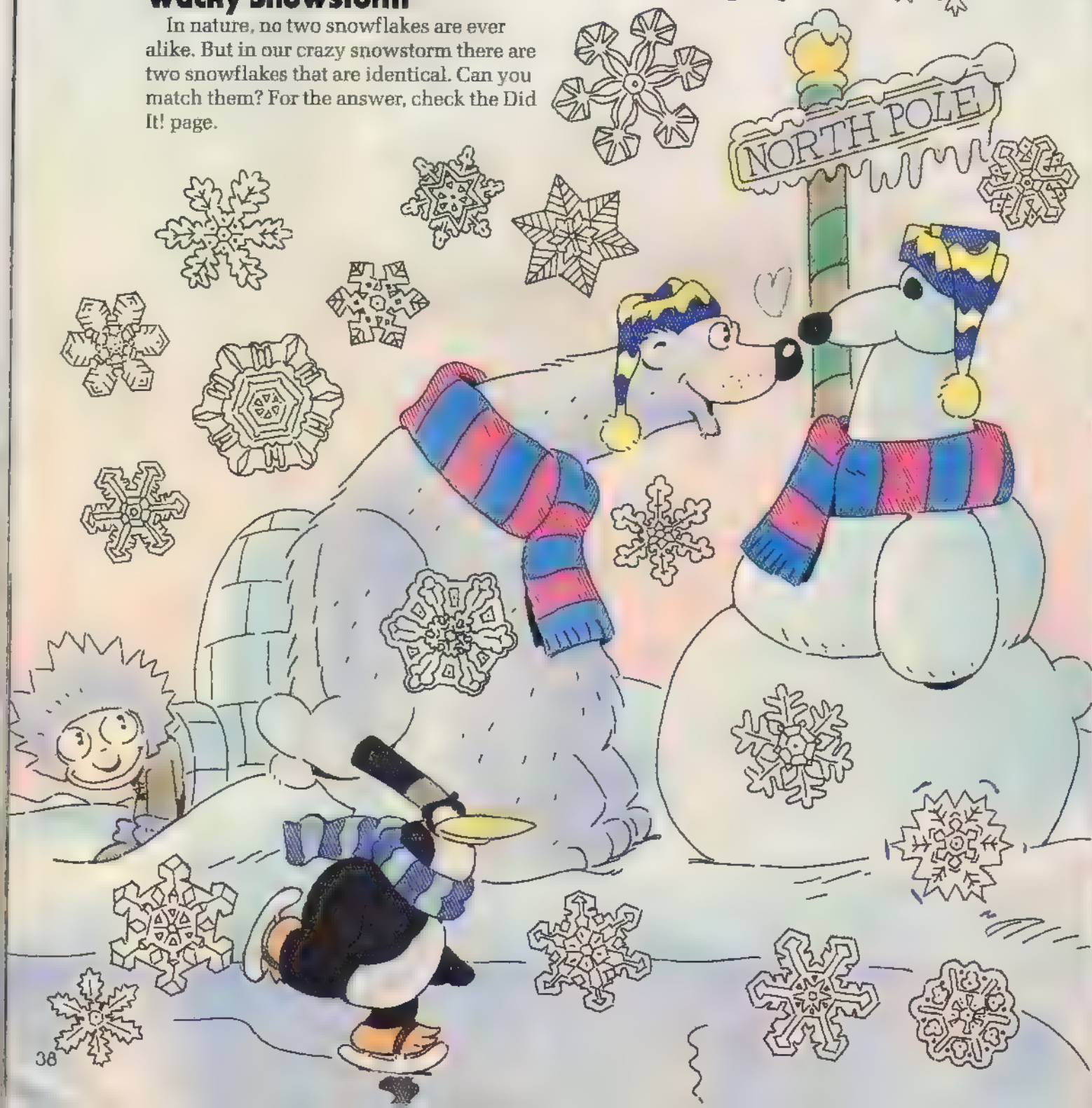
Extra!

by Ellen R. Mednick

It may be too cold to play outside, but there's plenty of indoor fun right here in this month's Extra!

Wacky Snowstorm

In nature, no two snowflakes are ever alike. But in our crazy snowstorm there are two snowflakes that are identical. Can you match them? For the answer, check the Did It! page.



Cold Spots

Did you know some spots on the body feel cold or heat more than others? Try mapping out your own hot and cold spots! Be sure and ask an adult to help you.

What You'll Need:

- a red and a blue fine felt-tipped pen (with washable ink)
- a bowl and a nail

Draw a one-inch square on the back of your hand. Fill the bowl with cold water. Then dip the nail in the water making sure the nail feels cold. Gently touch the tip of the nail to any spot inside the square on your hand. If you feel cold, mark the spot with a blue dot.



Keep dipping the nail in the cold water and continue to map out the cold spots in the square.

Now spill out the cold water, and fill the bowl with hot water. Dip the nail in the water until it feels hot to the touch. Test the square for the hot points, and mark those spots in red.

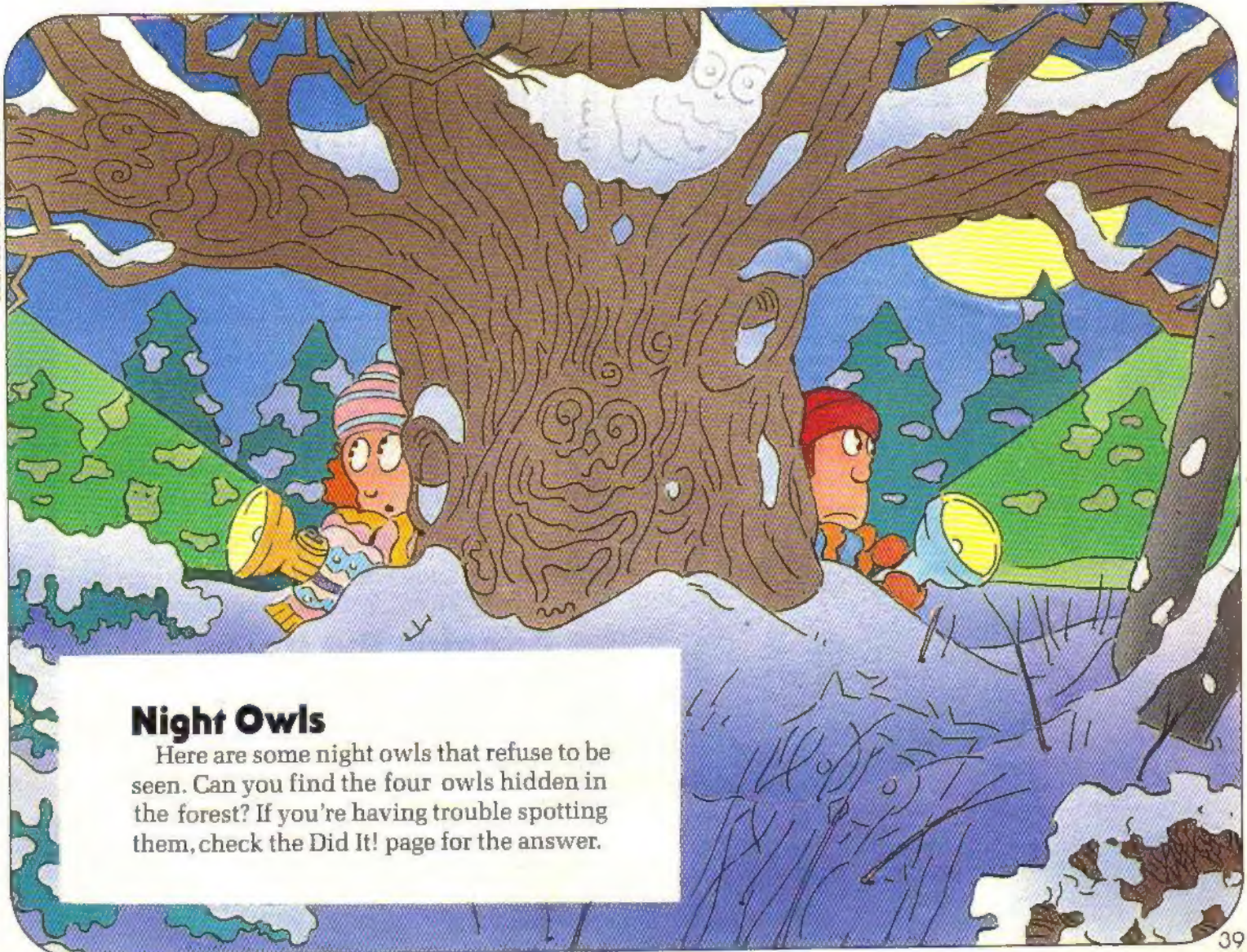
Why It Works

The body has separate spots called receptors which respond to hot and cold temperatures. Some parts of the body can feel cold more and some can feel heat more. Try this experiment on other parts of the body such as the soles of your feet.

You might find out that the best way to build a snowman is with your toes!

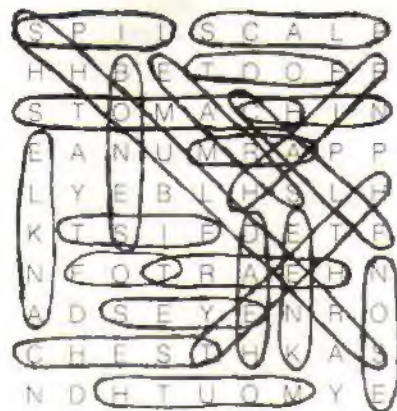
Night Owls

Here are some night owls that refuse to be seen. Can you find the four owls hidden in the forest? If you're having trouble spotting them, check the Did It! page for the answer.

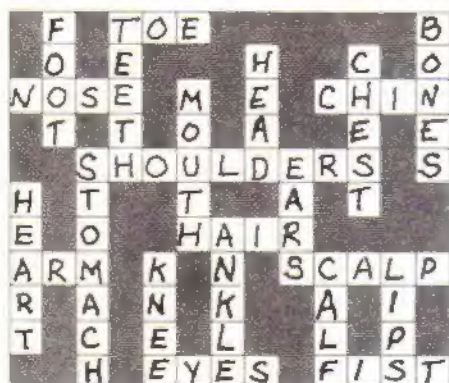


Did It!

Body Word Hunt



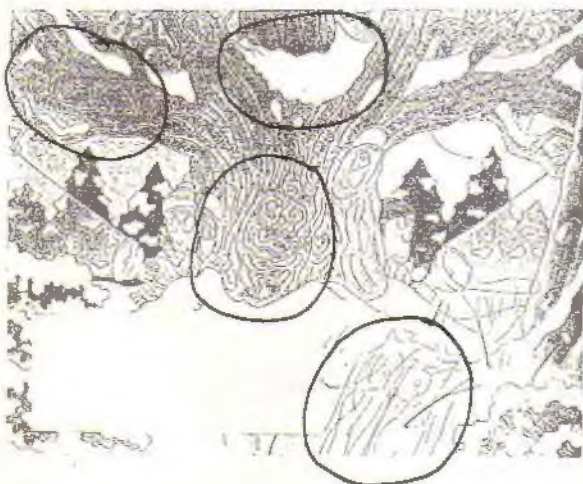
Body Crossword



Contact Lens Poster

The mystery man is Jacques Cousteau, the famous explorer of the world's oceans.

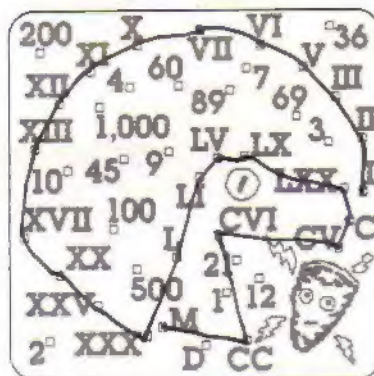
Night Owls



Wacky Snowstorm



Getting Mr. Glitch



Next Month!

Here's a look at some of the good things you'll find in the March issue:

In a Trance

A look at hypnosis and why some doctors are beginning to practice it.

Zoo Babies

A behind-the-scenes feature that brings the care and feeding of baby animals up close.


Bringing the House Down

How do you make a 10-story building disappear? Very carefully! Find out what we mean in this photo feature.

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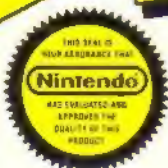
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